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Adjustment experiences of Taiwanese "Astronauts' Kids" in Canada

by
Chen-Chen Shih

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

in

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Abstract

The "Astronauts' Kids" phenomenon was revealed by media when a rush of new Chinese immigrants came to Canada in the late 1980's and the early 1990's. Many articles emphasized the negative consequences of parental absence on these "Astronauts' Kids" and their wealthy living style. However, the cause of this phenomenon and the psychological adjustment process of this group were not examined at a deeper level.

In this study, seven male Taiwanese immigrant adolescents were interviewed in the summer of 1998. Two resided in Edmonton, Alberta and five resided in Greater Vancouver, B.C.. Their ages ranged from sixteen to nineteen. After analyzing and comparing these adolescents' transcripts, I found five main themes: over-protected or distant parent-child relationships, making Chinese friends, growing up in a different culture, establishing roots in Canada and making a good adjustment to Canada. The seven stories are presented in narrative styles. By this study, exposing these adolescents' inner world to readers, the goal is to help Taiwanese parents or educators to understand the Taiwanese immigrant adolescents' needs.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Immigrants come to Canada from many countries every year. Most of them arrive with little support and sometimes even less knowledge of the changes they may encounter in Canada. The adjustment process may be more difficult for adolescent immigrants as they have to overcome challenges, such as leaving their friends in the old country, learning a new language and adapting to a foreign culture, combined with developmental issues, such as seeking their identity, establishing their independence, and seeking approval from new friends (Esquivel & Keitel, 1990).

It is apparent that some adolescent immigrants from Taiwan are living in Canada without their parents. Most of the adolescents usually settle first in a large metropolis, such as Toronto or Vancouver that has an established Taiwanese community and Taiwanese government office. A few of them settle in cities such as Edmonton or Calgary, where the number of Taiwanese immigrants is small. These adolescents may be living with older siblings, relatives, parents' friends, in residential schools, or alone. Because their parents often fly back and forth between Canada and Taiwan, some media refer to these adolescents as "Astronauts' Kids" or "Satellite Kids" (Ford, 1995; Matas & Howard, 1997).

There may be a variety of reasons why Taiwanese adolescents emigrate to Canada. Pursuing a better education is usually one factor. Some adolescents come to Canada because they or their parents want to avoid the excessive pressure from the

intensive and highly competitive education system in Taiwan. In a 1995 report, Hsue and Aldridge revealed that 20% of junior high school students in Taiwan passed the entrance examination and entered public high schools; 44% of high school students successfully continued university or college education after passing the second entrance examination.

The unstable political situation in Taiwan is another reason that Taiwanese parents decide to send their male teenage children to Canada. Due to the political tensions between the Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese governments, all healthy Taiwanese males are required to go to the army at the age of eighteen. However, they are allowed to leave Taiwan before the age of fifteen. Some parents may worry about the potential military conflicts between the two governments and want their male children to avoid the two years of compulsory military service in Taiwan.

Some Taiwanese immigrant parents may not be able to stay with their children for financial reasons. After settling their children in Canada, many parents find it difficult to find work in their original careers or businesses in this country (王廣淵, 1998). As a result, one or both of the parents are forced to go back to Taiwan so they can afford to support their children in Canada.

These adolescents may face many challenges. First, they have had little preparation for immigrating to Canada. The parents usually make the immigration decisions and do not inform or consult with their teenage children. Thus, the children may have little or no knowledge and expectations from this new society. Second, immigrating to Canada may change these adolescents' lives abruptly. They have to

adapt to the new school system, speak a different language, make new friends, and establish new social networks (Church, 1982; Ishiyama, 1989).

In addition to adjusting to a new language and culture, these adolescents have to face normal developmental challenges. If we follow Erikson's theory, they are still at the stage at which they are integrating their former experiences with those they have newly acquired to determine their proper role in society. They may also experience inner conflicts resulting from the struggle of integrating two cultures. For example, Taiwanese society has different expectations for students than Canada does. In Taiwan, all students are expected to strive for excellence in their school marks. To fall short of a high standard of marks, or fail an entrance exam can result in a student being denied by the Taiwanese society. In Canada, while good grades are sought, most parents want their children to find a balance in school. As long as a certain standards are met, a child may be allowed to participate in sports, friends' social activities, recreational classes or work part-time. When a Taiwanese student comes to Canada, he needs to make an adjustment to new expectations. At the same time, he/she is still expected to meet the Taiwanese expectation from his/her parents and Chinese friends. Immigrant adolescents also try to balance their autonomy and their dependence on their parents. If they are unable to accomplish these two goals, they may encounter problems in making the transition to adulthood (Erikson, 1968).

Some of the adolescents may be confused about their positions in the new society because sometimes the values of the two cultures are contrary to each other. Those Taiwanese adolescents who are from authoritarian or traditional Chinese

families may be pressured to follow the old values of their parents, such as obeying their parents' demands, maintaining Chinese traditions, and sacrificing individual needs to meet family needs (羅瑞玉,1988; Ho, 1994). At the same time, they are expected to fit into the Canadian environment, such as developing individual ideas, being able to comprehend Canadian norms, and integrating into society in a short period of time. While most researchers recognize that adolescent immigrants may deal with different adjustment issues, few studies have been conducted to examine these issues (Aronowitz, 1984; Sung, 1985).

The absence of parents may influence teenage children's adjustments. Lacking parental monitoring, the adolescents may become more independent because they have to make most day-to-day decisions by themselves. On the other hand, a lack of parental discipline can also have negative effects on the adolescents' adjustment (Fridrich & Flannery, 1995). Forgatch and Stoolmiller (1994) found that Hispanic adolescent immigrants who were without parental monitoring and supervision, such as setting up the curfew time, and asking about the children's daily activities, are more vulnerable to delinquency than those who have parental monitoring. However, the authors in the study pointed out that the cause and effect relationship may be the reverse. Some parents may not provide the monitoring to the children because the children refused to be supervised or are involved with delinquent behaviours. The parents may have no control over their children's daily lives or are not available to locate their children.

Lacking parental supervision may also affect the Taiwanese adolescent

immigrants' social resources. Receiving support has proved important to adolescents' later adjustments (Jou & Fukada, 1996). Parental support is especially necessary for these adolescent immigrants because they are close to their parents (趙維生, 1995). The support can help these adolescents extend their network in the local community so they can participate in culturally-based activities, access other sources of support, or more easily adjust to the changes (Chataway & Berry, 1989; Church, 1982).

Some Taiwanese parents may consider leaving their immigrant adolescent children alone in Canada as a transitional stage. To continue their business in Taiwan, one of the parents may stay with the children during the first year, and the other may travel back and forth to visit the family in Canada. When the parents think that the children are independent enough, the parents may ask for responsible guardians to supervise their children intermittently. Based on conversations with some Taiwanese families in Edmonton, I understand why some parents do not want to return their families to Taiwan. By doing so, the parents admit that their teenage children have no abilities in adjusting to Canadian society and the whole family may lose face.

The total number of this adolescent population is unknown. One reason is that the governments (i.e. both Taiwanese and Canadian) do not track the addresses of immigrants because they often move from one city to another after immigrating to Canada. Also, the statistical data do not address the household composition of these immigrant families. The other reason is the members of this adolescent group usually prefer not to be identified by government or school authorities. Some parents may warn their children not to tell any person from government authorities, or otherwise

the Canadian government may put them into welfare. Some adolescents do not tell their friends or school teachers because they are afraid to be labelled as Astronauts' Kids who may be viewed as undisciplined students in the eyes of the public. The result is that little information exists on this population. Consequently, assistance cannot be provided when the adolescents need help (王廣淇, 1998).

Although recent media have expressed concerns about this population , no direct research has been conducted to address these issues (Ford, 1995; Lee, 1997; Matas & Howard, 1997; 王廣淇, 1998). As a result, I would like to describe the adjustment experiences of these adolescents. The justification for this study is that the public may have a better understanding of this group. I recognize that this study cannot cover all themes of the Taiwanese male adolescent immigrants' experiences and the findings are limited to part of this group. I hope that this exploratory study conducted in a Canadian environment may contribute to the understanding of these adolescents' adjustment. I also hope to make their voice heard to the public.

Chapter 2: Related Literature and Research

Although no direct studies have been conducted on Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents, I have found that there are three main themes identified in Chinese immigrant studies: the adjustment processes, Chinese values, and factors related to successful adjustments. These themes will be used as a framework for exploring the adolescents' adjustment experiences in my study.

Historical Background

Chinese children studying in a new country alone is not a new phenomenon in Chinese history. One hundred and twenty years ago, the Chinese government started sending young students to the United States to study. Its purpose was to train a group of well-educated people and hope that they could contribute their learned knowledge to their homeland. During their studying period abroad, these young students who were mostly of elementary age had to overcome racial discrimination, obstacles of living in a different culture, their feelings of loneliness and difficulty in learning English. Most of them had adjustment problems, but they had to endure and hoped that they would be successful in their careers one day in the future. Upon their return to China, the media reported on these young students' successful stories of studying abroad and their better positions in government. The public did not recognize that these young students' had had a difficult adjustment process in the States (馬中天, 1986).

Studying abroad continued to be popular among Chinese parents (including

Taiwanese parents). They thought that getting a university degree in North America could help their children's careers in the future. A few wealthy parents who could afford to travel took their young children to North America and left the children abroad at the end of the trip. They hoped that their children could become one of the reported success stories. These parents usually asked their relatives or friends to take care of their children so the parents could return to Taiwan and continue their business. At that time, few of these young children's adjustment experiences were reported because of the limited number.

Sending young children abroad became a prevalent phenomenon in Taiwan after the Taiwanese government allowed its people to go abroad in 1979 (陳淑美 and 李淑華, 1986). Many Taiwanese departed for the United States with their families because of the unstable political situation between Taiwan and Mainland China. However, only a few of them settled in the States permanently. Most of these Taiwanese, upon receiving their American residency, returned to Taiwan after the political situation had settled somewhat. The parents did not take their children back to Taiwan because they did not want to disrupt their children's education. At this time, both Taiwanese media and the American media had started discussing this phenomenon and its consequences. 鄭其麟 (1994) and 邱秀文 (1985) in their articles referred to these children's adjustment difficulties in a different culture. They felt that the children might adjust to a new country fast but only at a shallow level. The children usually took a long time to find their identity and some of them could

never solve this problem. Those children who did not have legal status in the States could even have more adjustment issues. They also had to worry that the American government would find them and deport them back to Taiwan. 林家興 (1993) suggested that Taiwanese parents should not send their young children abroad and leave those children alone in a new country. He thought that these children did not have enough abilities to deal with abrupt changes from the new environment. When they had difficulties, they usually did not go to secure help from local agencies or the Taiwanese government because their parents told them not to tell anyone about what happen in their lives. He felt that these children were in vulnerable positions.

Although not every child had adjustment problems, the consequence of this phenomenon became an obvious concern for Taiwanese and the American society. 劉曉莉 (1985) described these children's adjustment stories from a reporter's perspective. After interviewing several Taiwanese students staying in the United States, she commented that these children should have received care and support from Taiwanese agencies in America. The writer felt that these children could become the target for local gangs or some of them participate in criminal activities. 羅子 (1986) suggested that Taiwanese society should not over-emphasize western degrees. Taiwanese parents should think thoroughly about the child's adjustment issues before sending their children abroad. In spite of all the writers' suggestions, little help was provided to these children. The public's concern about these children faded away as the media no longer reported their stories.

Sending children to another country became a trend again for Taiwanese parents in the late 1980's and 1990's. Because of the mounting difficulties in entering the United States, Taiwanese parents began sending their children to other western countries that had open immigration policies, such as Canada, Australia or Britain. Like the old Taiwanese generations, these parents hoped that their children could proceed through advanced education in the new country and could be successful in their future. However, despite the previous reported articles, the parents still left their children alone in the new country. This continuous phenomenon may be related to Chinese parents' attitude toward their children. 吳麗娟 (1998) felt that Chinese parents usually consider their children as their extended selves or property. The parents seldom ask for the children's opinion but make decisions for their children. Such an attitude may contribute to the "Astronauts' Kids" phenomenon. The parents wanted their children to be successful so their children's' success could glorify their name.

Adjustment Processes

Adjustment process in a new culture.

Several researchers have developed theories or models to explain immigrants' adjustment processes (Berry, 1992; Ishiyama, 1989; Oberg, 1962). They suggested that most immigrants experience specific stages in spite of different names used to describe them. These stages are: separating from the old culture and initial contact with the new one, establishing actual contact with the new culture, adjusting to the

new culture, and integrating into the new culture. A successful adjustment process means moving from being distant observers to becoming participants in society.

Some researchers thought that the adjustment process is composed of a continuity of stages (Church, 1982; Oberg, 1962). In the cultural shock theory, Oberg (1962) suggested that the experiences of adjusting to a new culture are always influenced by the interactions between individuals and their environments. He suggested that in the first stage, individuals often have high expectations and feelings of excitement about the new country at the time of their arrival, but they are not close to this new culture. Second, individuals feel disappointed or frustrated when they have communication problems or are not able to comprehend the norms of the new society. These negative feelings can affect their subsequent adjustment. In the third stage, they decide to seek solutions to solve the cultural conflicts. However, some may become over-dependent on their ethnic groups if their efforts to integrate into the new society are not appreciated. Depending on their success in solving the conflicts, some individuals may not integrate into the new culture (Kim Zapf, 1991).

Contrary to Berry's (1992), Oberg's (1962) and Phinney's (1992) theories, some researchers suggested that the actual length of residence in a new culture is not a determined predictor in explaining the immigrants' adjustment process (Kelly & Tseng, 1992; Kuo & Lin, 1977; Lam, 1980; Yinger, 1981). Each individual may follow a different schedule of adjusting to new changes. The individual adjustment schedule is dependent on the contact experiences with the local people, abilities to cope with changes and available resources in the new society. As well, some

immigrants may not complete the whole adjustment process in the new country. The study of Damji, Clement and Noels (1996) with 295 Anglophone students from the University of Ottawa have shown that the adjustment process was not stable. Immigrants sometimes might shift their identity to meet the needs of their environment. They found that when individuals identified with their first language and their environments, they expressed less frustration and depression than those who did not. The conflicting resulting from the above stated studies may indicate that some immigrants do not need to go through the suggested adjustment process (Oberg, 1962; Phinney, 1992) and they could still adjust to their new environment well.

Identity of the culture.

Immigrants usually face many cultural changes (O'Hara, 1994). While most can adjust to the differences in weather, food, and transportation in a short period of time, they may resist changes in their familiar values (Berry, 1992). Values are the core of the culture and shape the norms of society (Rosenthal & Feldman ,1992). Many studies proved that old values may last for generations. The first generation immigrants usually preserve most of their values of the old country and tend not to accept the new ones. (Ho, 1994; Kuo & Lin, 1977; Moyerman & Forman, 1992; Pieke, 1991; Rosenthal, Bell, Demetrion, & Efklides, 1989) In 1989, Rosenthal et al. found that those Greek adolescents who were born in Australia believe that participating in the Greek community and following group decisions are important values to them (Rosenthal, Bell, Demetrion, & Eflklides, 1989).

However, immigrants are often expected to change their old values and accept the new ones. Not being able to do so, they may find it difficult to assimilate or integrate into the new culture (Fong, 1966; Sayegh & Lasry, 1993). Adjustment is a cognitive process which influences immigrants' future coping strategies (Chataway & Berry, 1989). Successful adjustment reduces uncomfortable feelings and helps individuals feel compatible with the new culture (Berry, 1992). Based on the interaction of two dimensions-- whether to maintain one's ethnicity or accept the new values-- four types of immigrants are hypothesized in Berry's theory-Integration, Assimilation, Separation, and Marginization. Both the Integration and Assimilation types of individuals accept their new culture, but the latter do not maintain their old culture (Sayegh & Lasry, 1993). Although Separation immigrants preserve most of their old values, they also want to be accepted by their new society. When they do not succeed in achieving this goal, they may seek support from members of their ethnic groups. According to Berry's theory, there are few Marginization immigrants. These people are isolated from both their ethnic groups and the new society (Berry, 1992).

It has been demonstrated that Integration type immigrants tend to have the fewest adjustment problems and Marginization types have the most among the four types (Berry, 1992), but there are no consistent results in Assimilation or Separation types. Schmitz (1992) suggested that those who take part in the activities of the new culture, Assimilation types, often exhibit fewer psychosomatic symptoms than the Separation type immigrants. Assimilation type immigrants feel happier and are more

satisfied with their new lives than Separation types.

Although Berry's (1992) theory widely discussed types of immigrants' identity and their adjustment difficulties, he did not mention whether individuals' definition of adjustment had an effect in their efforts on confronting changes or their perspectives of adjustment difficulties. In my study, I assume that each participant's definition of adjustment would influence his interpretation of adjustment experiences. Some adolescents would stay close within Chinese culture and also attempt to integrate into local society. Some would rather preserve their old values than accept the new ones. I also do not expect that these participants would try to separate from both groups because they need to get support when their parents were not in Canada.

Chinese Values

Although Taiwan has changed from an agricultural society to an industrial society in recent years, most Taiwanese still practice the traditional Chinese values, such as the young should respect authority, individuals should follow groups' decisions, and children should obey parents' opinions (Ho, 1994; Sodowsky, Magnire, Johnson, Ngumba, & Kohles, 1994; Yang & Barnes, 1990; Wolfgang & Josefowitz, 1978). As well, all are expected to maintain harmony, to be non-aggressive, and not to embarrass other people in public (Ou & McAdoo, 1993). 羅瑞卡 (1988) in the self-report study also found that most adolescents in Taiwan carry out family values, such as children should glorify their parents and adult children should care for their senior parents.

Families are the main institution in which Taiwanese children practice Chinese values and learn the approved behaviours for interacting with other people (林惠雅, 1995). Parents, through daily conversations, teach their children how to interact with other people and learn to cope with life events (Miller, Fung, & Mintz, 1996) Taiwanese children are very close to their parents in spite of the authoritarian parenting style as found in most research (Chao, 1994; Chiu, 1987; Furhrman & Holmbeck, 1995). One explanation of the intact parent-child relationship is that, in addition to a high level of discipline, Taiwanese parents usually provide support and love for their children. Moreover, Taiwanese mothers are often encouraged to sacrifice their time and energy to make their children successful in school (Chao, 1994).

Taiwanese children are raised in a society which emphasizes the importance of keeping strong family ties and social networks (Sung, 1985). Parental support is necessary for Taiwanese children. In a study comparing the autonomy of teenagers in three countries, Feldman and Rosenthal (1991) found that Hong Kong high-school students have autonomy at a later age than those in Australia and the United States. Hong Kong adolescents usually participate in peer interactions which are pre-screened by their parents. Getting support from their families helps them obtain the knowledge of how to respond to people in different situations.

However, while the parent-child relationship is strong in most Taiwanese families, the adolescent children usually do not communicate with their parents. They seldom reveal their inner emotions to their parents. Several reasons could be

contributed to this controversial parent-child relationship. First, Taiwanese parents may think that giving material and financial support to their children is a symbol of expressing love and care. To provide a better environment for their children, both Taiwanese parents usually have to work and are not at home. Therefore, parents do not have time to talk with their children. Children may internalize parents' frequent absence as part of their value. They learn to solve their emotional needs by themselves.

Some researchers worry that the over-emphasis on materialism, such as providing plenty of money and buying brand name clothes may distort the parent-child relationship (張永勝, 1996; 蔡崇振; 1997). In the 1996 Taiwanese government report, the result pointed out that most adolescents complained that their parents do not spend enough time at home. Besides, it also stated an existing social problem in Taiwanese society. Taiwanese parents tried to meet their adolescent children's material requests, but the children are usually not satisfied with their parents' economic situation when they compared their families to their friends'. They felt that their parents did not make enough or supply enough money to them so therefore, they could not buy the brand name merchandise. The parents in turn would increase their children's monthly allowance. The Taiwanese society has become money-oriented. The children have not learned the value of money and the parents have used money as the substitute of care and love. (行政院青年輔導委員會, 1996十二月)

Secondly, adolescents in Taiwan feel that their parents usually stress academic

performance and ignore their other needs(行政院青年輔導委員會, 1996 一月). Although Taiwanese adolescents often consult with their parents in the areas of education, finance and career, they are likely to consult with their friends in the area of interpersonal relationships (Pieke,1991; Shek, 1995; 徐西森, 1996). Taiwanese parents usually set education as the only life goal for their adolescent children. Successful schooling may help people to find jobs, to have secure finances and to glorify the parents (Hsue & Aldridge, 1995). To accomplish this goal, parents usually discourage their children from participating in extra-curricular activities.

Like those in western countries, Taiwanese adolescents think that interpersonal relationships and personal health are their major concerns in addition to school work (黃君瑜, 1994; Ebata & Moos, 1994). However, without developing other skills, the adolescents may not be able to deal with changes happening in their lives. Studies have shown that Taiwanese adolescents in Taiwan develop different adjustment difficulties: 87% of adolescents have no life goals for the future (王淑女, 1995), some adolescents try to escape from the academic pressure by racing motorcycles illegally or playing gambling machines (蔡崇振, 1997), some adolescents lack confidence in themselves because they fail to excel in school and have no working skills either (王淑女,1995; 徐西森, 1996). When the adolescents are not able to solve these problems and do not receive emotional support from parents, friends or counsellors, they may have adjustment problems (陳皎眉, 詹歷監, & 郭美滿, 1993; Masten, Neemann, & Andenas, 1994; Mates & Allison, 1992).

Thirdly, although Taiwanese parents care for their children, they usually do not know how to communicate with their adolescent children. Taiwanese research has shown that the adolescents have the lowest percentage of communication with their parents least among all other age groups of children.(詹美涓&黃迺毓, 1993; 行政院青少年輔導委員會, 1996; Kelly & Tseng, 1992) Verbal expressions and physical contact are usually not encouraged in the Taiwanese parent-child relationship, especially in the father-child relationship (Yee, Yang, & Barnes, 1990; 詹美涓,1992).In the study of Kelley and Tseng (1992), they found that only one third of Chinese mothers express their emotions to the children and some of the mothers reported that they express more negative emotions in the mother-child relationship, such as rejection and blame. In 1995, 許筱梅 stated that Taiwanese parents usually tend not to communicate with their children and they interfere too much with their children's lives. They often arrange their children's lives without two way communication (Yee et al., 1990). The adolescents may perceive that the parents try to control their lives (Ho, 1994; 羅瑞玉, 1988).

Taiwanese and western parents usually share similar values with respect to raising their children, but they may emphasize different dimensions and degrees. In general, western parents focus on individual development while Taiwanese parents focus on group needs (Chao, 1994; Miller et. al., 1996). For example, mothers in both cultures may think that children should have frequent contact with other children. However, western mothers help their children by bolstering their self-esteem, while

Chinese parents teach their children to be considerate of other people (Chao,1995). In Kelley and Tseng's (1992) study, Taiwanese mothers respond more to their children's physical and material needs than the western mothers. Nevertheless, Taiwanese parents in the younger generation influenced by western culture may have more democratic attitudes toward raising their children than those of the older generations. Young Taiwanese parents may also encourage their children to explore individual interests (Chiu,1987).

Taiwanese adolescent immigrants may find that their old values are challenged after moving to a western culture (Chia, Wuensch, Childers, Chuang, Chang, Cesar-Romero, & Nava, 1994; Ho, 1994; Kuo & Lin, 1977; Pieke, 1991; Shek, 1995; Wolfgang & Josefowitz, 1978) For example, a Taiwanese student may be considered unresponsive because he or she usually may not express his or her opinions in class, a characteristic which is considered appropriate in Taiwanese culture because students are not encouraged to do so (Sung, 1985). In Taiwan, students usually do not question either their teachers or school administrators, because the public may think that doing such a behaviour challenges the teachers' intelligence and authority (Ho, 1994). The adolescents may also have difficulties in making western friends because they are taught not to reveal their feelings in public. However, their Western peers may interpret this as a sign of unfriendliness (Sung, 1985).Taiwanese children may argue with their parents, though, if they are expected to follow the traditional values which may not be approved of in western society (Chao, 1995; Chiu, 1987).

Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents, like other adolescents in Taiwan, are

still at an age at which they depend on their parents and usually do not have enough skills to cope with stress (Chao, 1995). However, they are now in a situation in which they have to face many changes in their daily lives without their parents. Furthermore, these adolescent immigrants may experience feelings of loneliness because they may be surrounded by only a small number of their countrymen (Wang, 1995). Some adolescents may have contradictory feelings toward their parents. On one hand, they may feel relieved to be without their parents in Canada because they do not have as much direct pressure from the parents as they had in Taiwan. On the other hand, they may want their parents to stay in Canada so they feel secure and cared for in the new country (與台加文化協會輔導員晤談, 1998).

Factors Related to Adjustment

Adolescence is a stage at which individuals try to find ways of adjusting to a number of issues such as education, future career, interpersonal relationships , and life style (Erikson, 1964; Negy & Woods, 1992). It is also a time of establishing their social network and practicing interpersonal skills. Some Chinese teenagers may think it a loss of status if they are not able to make friends (Ishiyama, 1989). Although Erikson (1968) suggested that the inner conflicts can broaden the self-realization of teenagers, the unsolved conflicts may lead to adjustment problems (Ying & Liese, 1994). Some adolescents may not solve the conflicts depending on their language ability, personal experiences, social support, age, and coping skills. In the literature, several factors discussed below are identified as significant in influencing adolescent

immigrants' adjustment although the causative relationships among the factors are usually intertwined. Although Social Economic Status (SES) has often been suggested as an indicator in adolescent immigrants' adjustment (Flanagan & Eccles, 1993; Forgatch & Stoolmiller, 1994; Negy & Woods, 1992), I will not discuss it in my study. These Taiwanese adolescent immigrants are usually from similar SES background, from middle to upper-middle class.

Language.

Language proficiency is usually a factor influencing immigrant adolescents' adjustment (Pak, Dion & Dion, 1985; Tseng, 1994; Park, 1995; Sayegh & Lasry, 1993). There are two types of communication: verbal and non-verbal. A number of sources indicate that both can have substantial effects on immigrants' experiences in adjustment. Comprehending the non-verbal language can be a beneficial factor for the integration of these adolescents. When they interact with their friends, they learn the norms of Canadian culture and understand how to interpret their friends' behaviours (Fong, 1966; Jones, Gallois, Barker, & Callan, 1992; Pak et al., 1985). This ability helps these immigrant adolescents feel accepted by the mainstream society.

Language is a tool by which people can exchange their understanding of any event, object, or feelings with other people (Maines & Ulmer, 1993; McCall, 1990). However, the shared meaning in one culture may not be understood or may be interpreted differently by an outsider (Goodwin & Lee, 1994). Verbal language has been identified as a significant factor in previous studies. (Pak, Dion, & Dion, 1985;

Park, 1995; Tseng, 1995) The ability to carry on conversations fluently in English can help the adolescents in asking questions in class, communicating with their English-speaking friends, and expressing their needs to other people (Sung, 1985). As well, it may help these adolescents feel accepted by society because they can develop close friendships with English-speaking peers. Those who are not able to express their needs in English may feel isolated and later withdraw from interactions (Sung, 1985).

Previous individual experiences.

Previous experiences can also affect the adjustment of Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents (Church, 1982; Locke & Feinsod, 1982). Teenagers who have frequently travelled to other countries, who have had contact with western people in Taiwan, who have experienced a variety of changes in their lives, or who know what to expect in the new culture may feel confident about themselves in the new country and prepare themselves for changes. Conversely, those who are unwilling to leave their own country or have a history of being unable to adjust to minor changes may face impediments in establishing their social networks in a new culture (Church, 1982).

Strong motivation may be an important factor of a successful adjustment. When adolescents are willing to move to a new country and to accept the new values, they may participate in local activities and want to become part of the society (Kopala, Esquivel & Baptise, 1994). On the contrary, when they think of staying in the new country as a transitional stage, they may not want to work hard to integrate into the culture (Sayegh & Lasry,1993). For example, although Taiwanese adolescent

immigrants and international high school students may share similar backgrounds: coming from Taiwan, living in Canada without their parents, facing changes in their lives (i. e. learning a language, adapting to a new culture, and being separated from familiar people in Taiwan), they may be different in their motivation for adjusting to Canadian society. The adolescent immigrants may identify themselves as Canadians. They think that Canada is their country so they have to work hard to integrate into this environment. However, international students may recognize that they will move to another country or go back to Taiwan after completing their education in Canada. Although they may also try to adjust to Canadian society, they may not work as hard as the adolescent immigrants. When the international students feel that their efforts of integrating into Canadian society are not appreciated, they may give up trying to adjust to it. (Chataway & Berry, 1989; Hsu, Hailey, & Range, 1986; Schmitz, 1992)

Individual temperament may be related to the adolescents' adjustments. 黃德祥 (1991) found that outgoing and sociable adolescents usually have less adjustment difficulties in their interpersonal relationships. However, the author pointed out that the environmental influences in studying the adjustments should not be ignored although he did not include it in his research. A friendly and supportive environment may provide extensive resources to the adolescent immigrants. Thus, they feel comfortable and secure to contact the new culture (Ebata & Moos, 1994).

Age.

Results of previous studies have pointed that age is not a predictive factor in the

adolescent immigrants' ease of adjustment. Young adolescents are often believed to adjust to the new environments more easily than the older ones (Ashworth, 1982), because they are able to absorb the changes quickly. Very young teenagers may not have enough coping skills to deal with the emotional reactions and conflicts in interpersonal relationship in the adjustment process (Dyal & Chan, 1985; , 1988). Vercruysse and Chandler's study (1992) has shown that older teenagers tend to apply positive coping strategies to their stress. They deal with the unpleasant emotions instead of avoiding it. Ebata and Moos (1994) also found that high school adolescents are able to practice a range of coping strategies, such as finding solutions, seeking support, and temporarily escaping from an uncomfortable situation because of the changes in their lives and their improved cognitive abilities. However, they did not address that the teenagers' age is an independent variable from other factors. No matter what age Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents are, without the presence of their parents, they may not know how to solve the problems in their daily lives.

Age and coping skills have usually been found together in Chinese and western adolescents' adjustment studies (Ebata & Moos, 1994; Hardy, Power, & Jaedicke, 1993). Although the researchers did not have consistent results on the age factor, they have found that adolescents often use either approach or avoidance strategy to confront problems (Ebata & Moos, 1994). When adolescents cannot control events, predict the consequences and have few resources, they tend to deny the existence of the problem, have negative feelings toward other people, or escape the situation (王

沂釗, 1995; 陳皎眉, 詹歷監, & 郭美滿, 1993; Hardy et al., 1993; Masten et al.,1994; Mates & Allison, 1992). However, these studies do not explain why under the same circumstance, some adolescents perceive stress and develop adjustment problems while others do not.

Social support.

Social support has been studied as an important factor in the studies of adolescent immigrants' adjustments. Parents, local community and friends are usually the three most influential groups. Family is the most supportive environment for adolescents' adjustments. The findings of 趙維生 (1995) have suggested that Taiwanese adolescents usually seek their parents' approval in the area of career choice, finance, and education. However, he pointed out that the adolescents also hope to receive emotional support from their parents in addition to material support. 王沂釗 (1995) found that when family members have close interactions, adolescents report less adjustment problems. In my study, depending on participants' previous parent-child relationship and other available resources, their parents' absence may have different effects on each individual.

Most Taiwanese immigrant teenagers are eager to be accepted by Canadians but also want to keep their ethnicity by maintaining friendships with their Chinese peers (Furnham & Alibhai, 1985). Those who have western friends extend their social networks and adjust better to the new culture (Fong, 1966). At the same time, they

may feel secure as a result of maintaining close relationships with other Taiwanese (Furham & Alibhai, 1985). Studies have found that Chinese immigrants or international students usually ask for help from Chinese groups, because they can reveal their personal problems in the same language. However, they may also want to consult with their western friends if they perceive that they support them (Ying & Liese, 1994).

Friends are important to the Taiwanese adolescent immigrants. They may receive support from their friends when the parents are not able to do so or to understand their feelings (行政院青年輔導委員會, 1996十二月). Without adequate social skills, the adolescents may not be able to make their own friends (黃德祥, 1991). Coming to Canada may limit the selections of friends for the adolescents. They may receive few choices from their ethnic peers if they are surrounded by only a small number of Taiwanese.

Adolescents who live in Vancouver have more opportunities to make contact with other Taiwanese peers than adolescents in Edmonton (Badets, 1989; 簡莉盈& 鄭泰安, 1995). Those adolescents in Vancouver may also feel secure by keeping close relationships with Taiwanese peers. When they feel lonely, they may talk to their friends at school or participate in the activities of Taiwanese associations. Other adolescents in Edmonton may not be able to do so because they may not find other Taiwanese students at school. As well, they may not articulate their feelings of loneliness to their western friends in English.

However, those Taiwanese adolescents living in Edmonton may also receive strong support from the local Chinese community. Some researchers argue that the size of the Chinese population is not a sufficient factor in explaining the amount of support immigrants receive. Rosenthal and Feldman (1992) in their study have pointed that although the first generation Chinese immigrants in Australia are fewer than those in the United States, they did not perceive that they had less support from the local Chinese people. Because there is limited support for these immigrants, the isolation may contribute to a more cohesive group in this new country.

The result of the literature review shows that the Taiwanese male immigrant adolescent's adjustment is a complicated process that needs further study. Although these studies recognize the influence of many factors, it is not effective to separate one factor from the others. Each individual may have unique experiences depending on his past history, surrounding environments, and usable resources. While language, previous individual experiences, age, and social support have been proved to be significant variables in many immigrant studies, the researchers usually ignore the fact that these factors are intertwined and each factor may have a different degree of effect on other factors. For example, language and social support may interact in a Taiwanese male immigrant adolescent adjustment. He may find it difficult to adjust to the Canadian environment because of his limited English ability in the first year. However, he may not think the language as an obstacle adjusting to this environment because he receives support from his western friends. His previous experiences of

coping with stress may also have effects on his adjustment. In my opinion, each factor is interdependent and it is almost impossible to have clear cause and effect relationships found in studies (Ying & Liese, 1994).

The research done may not be applied to my study because the authors did not include parental monitoring and support as a factor in the adolescent immigrants' adjustment. The detachment from the parents may lead to emotional adjustment problems for adolescent immigrants (Fuhrman & Holmbeck, 1995). Some Taiwanese immigrant adolescents who do not have their parents in Canada may join gangs to cope and seek support (Ennett & Bauman. 1994; Fridrich & Flannery, 1995). 簡莉盈&鄭泰安 (1995) suggested that the adolescents have less drug use behaviours when their parents pre-screen the friends and associates of the children. Some Taiwanese adolescent immigrants may miss their families and become depressed without their parents in Canada (Dyal & Chan, 1985). Others may continue their regular lives as they have in Taiwan (王廣淵, 1998).

Chapter 3: Research Methods

In this section, I will provide details of how my key informant got involved in this study, why I included only male participants for interviewing and how I recruited my participants, conducted the interviews and analyzed the interview transcripts. In the end, I also discuss how I built trusting relationships with the participants and what the ethical issues were in this study.

Before the Study

My key informant was important to my recruitment in participants for this study. Eight months before the study was conducted, I coincidentally came across a Taiwanese immigrant adolescent at his high school. I was asked to do a translation between he and his school counselor. At that time, the school teachers thought that this adolescent had learning difficulties so he was unable to catch up with school work. They wanted me to do a series of assessments and translate the results to them.

I remembered my first meeting with this adolescent. As soon as I walked into the testing room, I could feel his nervousness and hostility towards me. He did not respond to any of my questions. It was half an hour before he relaxed enough to start talking to me. When we finally finished his assessment, I knew that this adolescent did not have learning difficulties. He just lacked interest in going to school. He said that he was the only Taiwanese student and he did not have any close friends at school. I left my phone number for him and told him that he could call me if he needed any other assistance in his life.

One week later, I got this adolescent's call. At this time, he sounded very talkative. He told me that he came from Taiwan three years ago. Before he came to Edmonton, he was living in Vancouver. He was transferred to the current high school because he failed his school work in Vancouver. His mother thought that he might concentrate on his school work better if he was in an environment with no distraction from Chinese friends. He also told me that this was not the first time he was living in a new place without his parents. He used to live with his younger sister upon their arrival in Canada. He apologized for his impoliteness to me regarding the first time we met. He thought that I was a representative from the government and wanted to investigate his personal life. He did not want to engage in a conversation with me because he was afraid that I might make a report of our talk.

Our friendship grew fast. I became quite involved in his life. He usually phoned me and asked me to do translation or interpretation. In spite of his three years staying in Canada, he had never felt comfortable speaking English. He always avoided talking to local people and tried to stay with Chinese people. He was unfamiliar with many Canadian customs. However, I knew that his English was good enough to comprehend most people's conversations. The reason why he phoned me so often was because he felt lonely and bored.

When he felt comfortable that I was a caring person and did not want to take advantage of him, he started talking about his family. From his conversation, I knew that he had a conflict with his mother. On one hand, he did not like his mother's interference in his life. On that other hand, he was eager to get his mother's love and

attention. He would follow his mother's instructions to make her happy. He told me that his parents wanted him to succeed at school, but he felt that " there was an invisible wall between him and school ". He was not able to go through that obstacle and meet his parents' expectations. He felt that he was a failure.

Just before I knew my key informant, I was about to decide which age of Chinese immigrants that I would like to interview for my study. I was very interested in adolescents, but I thought that I would not have enough understanding of this group. After spending months with my key informant and his Chinese adolescent friends, I felt that I was ready to conduct this study. My key informant and I worked together reviewing all the initial interview questions. I listed all of the questions and asked him to mark those ones which were relevant to his adjustment experiences. He suggested that I emphasize the area of friendship because he knew that it was important to most of his friends. Later, I asked his permission to conduct a pilot interview. This interview was not part of my study. From this interview, I made notes under each major question. I was able to use these notes later when I wanted to probe specific questions from other participants.

During the interview process, he not only referred his friends to this study but also introduced me to other adolescent groups so I could participate in their regular activities. Before my interview with him was completed, my key informant dropped out of his school. He was asked to return to Vancouver by his mother. Three months later, he went back to Taiwan. We sometimes talked on the phone or wrote through emails. I knew that he was not able to enroll in a regular high school in Taiwan

because he was twenty years old. He was working for his father's company and preparing to enter a correspondence college program.

Reasons for Male Participants in this Study

Before and during the study, people often asked me why I only recruited males and whether few participants would be accepted as a study or not. To answer these questions, I needed to explain my assumptions to conduct this study. First, I assumed that Taiwanese male adolescents will encounter more difficulties in Canada than their female counterparts. Taiwan is a male dominant society so males usually have privileges in seeking jobs, getting promotion at work, and being protected by society. In my opinion, these advantages may no longer exist after they emigrate to Canada because of their limited language ability and the different culture. However, both the Chinese and the Canadian society still continue to expect them to be successful.

Second, I expected that more Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents would be living without their parents in Canada than females. One reason may be due to the two year compulsory military services for males in Taiwan. Another is that Chinese parents worry about their sons' education more than that of their daughters. Coming to Canada, these male adolescents may have better opportunities for continuing their education while they are not able to do so in Taiwan.

Third, the majority of my key informant's contacts are males. Therefore, I had opportunity to initiate the first conversation either on the phone or face to face meeting with these male adolescents. Later, some of them felt comfortable talking to

me and were willing to participate in the interviews.

Fourth, a small number of participants fits the purpose and the feasibility of this study. According to my contacts with Taiwanese male adolescents, I found that it usually took time to let them talk about themselves. It even took more time to make them talk about their family relations and their inner feelings. Therefore, I decide to interview a small number of adolescents so I could have time to make a thorough interview for each individual.

A small number of participants is also practical for this study. In my personal experience of contacting the Taiwanese government officers in Ottawa, Taiwanese community associations and Chinese media in Edmonton and Vancouver, I found that there was no information or resources to locate these adolescents for this study. Besides, these adolescents usually do not trust outsiders. As a result, trying to recruit a big number of participants would be inefficient and also ineffective.

Finally, generalization is not the purpose of this study (Brink & Wood, 1994; Morse & Field, 1995; Sandelowski, 1995). I recognized that each individual is unique and has different adjustment experiences. Trying to recruit a big number of adolescents and to generalize their stories would delete their uniqueness.

Recruitment of Participants

Seven Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents were recruited in this study. Snowball sampling was used to recruit the participants in this study. Brink and Wood (1994) stated that snowball sampling can be applied to a study in which researchers

are not able to identify the participants in society or the group members do not trust an outsider. During the period of recruitment, I found that participants usually only talked to or made friends with people from the similar background (i.e. Taiwanese adolescents, parents sometimes are not in Canada). Their parents, relatives or friends were also suspicious of my inquires at the initial stage of recruitment. I found that a personal network was very helpful for me to access them. Through the extensive network of one key informant and my Chinese friends who resided in Edmonton and in the greater Vancouver area, I was allowed to explain the nature of this study to the participants and their families.

All participants in this study were recruited through personal contacts and outside of the school systems. Seven Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents were willing to participate in the interviews. I was acquainted with three of them (two were from Edmonton and one was from Richmond, B.C.) before the first interviews were conducted in the summer of 1998. Five of the participants were referred to me by my key informant. Although I would have liked to try different personal networks to recruit other participants, my Chinese friends told me that most Taiwanese adolescents that they knew returned to Taiwan for their summer vacation or they did not mind casual talks but refused to sign the consent forms.

Among the seven participants in this study, two lived in Edmonton and five lived in the Greater Vancouver area. Their age ranged from sixteen to nineteen. During the follow-up interviews, one teenager dropped out of school, one commenced university and five were in high school programs. The duration of time that each had lived

outside of Taiwan varied. The longest was eight years and the shortest was two years. Two of the adolescents came to Canada as international students first. During the time of interviews, they were all either Canadian citizens or landed immigrants. All of these adolescents' parents had been absent from Canada for at least six months during the first two years of their children's arrival.

Data Collection

Open-ended questions (see Appendix A) were used in intensive individual interviews to gather information about the participants' adjustment experiences. A few questions were added into the later interviews after the first two participants repeated similar issues which I did not cover in the original question list. For example, one of the added question was "Can you tell me what you missed when you parents were not here in Canada? Please tell me the reason."

All the participants in this study were informed of the purpose of this study in Mandarin and completed consent forms before the interview. Taking these adolescents to restaurants was part of my study plan because I assumed that they would feel comfortable to talk to me there in our first meetings. However, I found out that these adolescents voluntarily revealed their stories to me after they agreed to participate in the first interviews through the phone. They were willing to talk about their feelings to me because they considered me as their friend.

Interviews were conducted in various locations. One was in my office in University of Alberta. The others were in a library, food court, a radio station, their

houses or their friends' house. The first interview in each case was more than one hour. The longest was two and half hours. The second interviews were conducted in January of 1999. Four participants agreed to have another interview by phone. I was not able to contact the other three by phone and mail. Each of the four participants was asked to review their own transcription before the interview was conducted. The time for each second interview was between fifteen minutes and half an hour.

A "Grand Tour" question was asked first in the first interview (Spradley, 1979). It was, "Please describe a typical day in your daily life in Edmonton/Vancouver." (see Appendix A) An extensive review of literature in the area of adolescent immigrants and the result of the initial interviewing analysis based on the full descriptions of participants guided the follow-up questions. Most teenagers did not respond to the grand tour questions. They were unsure where to start their experiences.

The subsequent questions posed to the participants began with "You have told me about your adjustment experiences in Edmonton/Vancouver. Can you tell me how you deal with the changes (including parents are and are not in Canada)?" Participants were also asked about their personal background, such as their previous parent-child relationship (see Appendix A) so I could understand the characteristics of the participants.

Data Analysis

A combination of content analysis (constant comparison) and narrative analysis (context analysis) were used to identify recurrent themes and examine individual

patterns in participants' adjustment experiences (Clandinin & Connelly,1994; Miles & Huberman,1994; Morse & Field, 1995; Riessman, 1993). Narrative analysis is appropriate for this qualitative study because it maintains the complexity of the participants' stories and encompasses their emotional expression, their outer environments, and the duration of their significant events (Clandinin & Connely,1994; Maines & Ulmer, 1993; McCall, 1990). With a narrative analysis, I was able to depict these adolescents' lives in a holistic perspective and hoped that their stories would be clear to readers. The analysis provided a broad outline of participants' lives in a cultural and historical context (Coste, 1993; Josselson, 1995).

Memoing was helpful for managing data in my study (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The process was a continuity of comparison. Miles and Huberman (1994) described memoing as subtracting the ideas which emerge from the data, the purpose of which is to put them together, so researchers can present a general concept. In my study, I wrote down any ideas, and fieldnotes beside the original sources when I read the transcription the first time. Second, these data were organized and compared with respect to their differences and similarities line by line. Third, I refined main themes by merging the compared memo into smaller sets of concepts. Fourth, following each interview, I was looking for emerging themes that could be expanded to new interviews. Fifth, memoing and constant analysis both continued until no unique themes appear in the data and no additional participants were obtained. Finally, I compared identified themes in my study with those in the literature review (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

All the interview questions were asked in Mandarin (i.e. the official language in Taiwan). The answers were tape recorded and transcribed in a Chinese word processing program. I translated the results of the study into English and I referred to a Chinese friend for some fine tuning. The findings of the study were presented in a story style that included accounts of their lives in Canada with and without their parents. At the end of the research, I described the main themes identified in these stories and explained why they were important in understanding the participants' experiences.

Trustworthiness

The following four points were utilized to ensure that data collection and data analysis could answer my research questions, "What are the adjustment experiences of Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents?" and how credible were their stories. First, a trusting relationship was established between me and each of the participants (Lincon & Guba, 1985). Showing empathy and respect to the participants was important in this relationship (Josselson, 1993). They felt that I was more than a researcher and wished to share their experiences with me. Therefore, I was able to receive sincere responses from them.

Second, the results of previous studies helped me conceptualize this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I recognized that I was not able to include all of the participants' experiences in my final reports but only those that were most relevant. I decided to choose particular themes because they are significant in the participants'

interviews and in previous studies. In order to ensure that the findings are as convincing as possible, I asked the participants to read their own stories transcribed from the original interviews. The participants and other people who have close contact with these participants were also asked to examine the congruence between my report and their real lives (Dreher, 1994). I revised the report based on their feedback.

Third, I recognized that my personal assumptions had an influence in this study. However, when I interpreted the participants' experiences, I was aware of the existence of my values and understood that they might influence the methods of collecting and analyzing data (Riessman, 1993). I knew that both the participants and I shared our values in the interviews and our values were changed during this process. Although I provided support to them when they needed help, I did not interfere in their lives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Writing a journal and fieldnotes helped me keep track of changes in the process of this study (Spradley, 1979).

Ethical Issues

Informed Consent (see Appendix B) was obtained from all participants and their guardians (parents) when they were under the legal age. According to the regulations of the University of Alberta, researchers need to get parents' or legal guardians' consent when participants are under the age of 18. In my study, two participants were under the age of 18, so I explained the nature, and procedures of my study to both parents (legal guardians) and participants. Parents' (legal guardians)

consent was obtained before the interviews were conducted.

According to the Child Welfare Act in Alberta and British Columbia, adults need to report to related authorities when they find that minors under the age of 18 are living at risk. I was required to report to social workers, or other professionals if I found that participants in the Greater Vancouver area and the Edmonton area who were under the age of 18 were living at risk (emotionally or physically). Participants in the Greater Vancouver area and the Edmonton area may range from 15 to 19 years of age in this study. In this study, no participants were found to live at risk.

I contacted one participant's mother first on the phone and explained to her the nature and procedures of my study either on the phone or in first face-to-face contact (Information Sheet, see Appendix C). Both of the minor participant's parents were not in Canada. I obtained his legal guardian's (his older brother) consent before the interview. Each of the two participants had the nature and procedures of the study explained to them after their parent or guardian agreed to allow the adolescents to participate in this study.

Participants, their parents (legal guardians) and I all spoke Mandarin and Taiwanese, so language was not a problem for obtaining consent. As well, the Consent Forms were written in both English and Chinese. Participants or their parents (legal guardians) chose the version they felt comfortable with.

After the transcripts were finished, each participant was asked to read his own and to verify the content. They were informed of their options to delete any part of conversation which they did not feel comfortable with. Four participants read the

transcripts and responded to me. They agreed with their stories and did not want to delete any part of them.

Each Consent Form and the transcribed data will be kept together in a locked facility for at least seven years. Tapes were destroyed after the final report completed. I used Chinese pseudonyms (false names) in this study so the participants' names would not be identified through the data. My key informant and friends knew the participants who were referred through his personal networks. However, the raw data is only available to the researcher.

Chapter 4: Findings

The following seven stories were created from the transcripts of each interview. Each adolescent was given a false Chinese name. Any names or information which may lead to recognition of these adolescents' identity was altered.

Chi-Quing

Background.

The first time I met Chi-Quing was at a Chinese restaurant in Edmonton. He and his friends often go out together as a group to Chinese restaurants or Karaoke clubs. At the restaurant, my key informant introduced me to Chi-Quing and his friends as a caring senior sister from Taiwan. Before the interview was conducted, we had talked twice on the phone briefly. Chi-Quing and I came together again on his nineteenth birthday. The party was in a Chinese Karaoke club where I saw about sixty teenagers, both Chinese and non-Chinese scattered in the singing room and the lobby. Chi-Quing was glad to see me. My impression of him was that he has a variety of friends ranging from teenagers to grown-up adults.

Chi-Quing's interview was conducted in a research room at the University of Alberta. I started my first interview with him because he was willing to share his story with me. When I asked his permission to participate in the study, he said, "Friends should help friends, without a doubt of it."

Chi-Quing's story of coming to Edmonton.

Chi-Quing came to Edmonton as an international student in the summer of 1995 with his brother. Both of them left Taiwan before reaching the age of eighteen at which time they would have been legally obligated to serve in the army for a two year term. At the time, he was 16 and his brother was 17. Half a year later, his status had changed into a permanent landed resident after his parents' immigration application was accepted by the Canadian government.

During the first six months upon arrival, he and his brother stayed with a close friend of his parents'. He described in our interview that this friend only wanted to take advantage of his father. After his father had lost a fortune in a joint business venture and found out that the friend had cheated on the father, he and his brother were soon moved into an apartment. By this time, this friend was still their legal guardian because of his parents' absence in Canada. However, Chi-Quing and his brother usually did not answer the apartment door when the father's business partner attempted to visit. Chi-Quing spoke of his response to this friend's daily visit:

> *We do not like him. We would stay inside the apartment and deliberately not answer his call.*

At the end of spring in 1996, the whole family were reunited. His parents returned to Canada and purchased a house. His parents occasionally visit his grandparents and friends in Taiwan once or twice a year. Chi-Quing and his brother have not been to Taiwan since they left in 1995.

Chi-Quing came to Canada with no warning at all. He was told that he would

leave Taiwan one day before his departure. Despite no knowledge of Canada and poor ability in English, he did not find it difficult to live in a new country. He thought that he would return to Taiwan soon after finishing his ESL classes. After four months had passed, he found out that instead of going back to Taiwan, he has to live permanently in Edmonton. He started perceiving the surrounding environment from a different viewpoint. The following quotations show his subtle change from thinking that he was a visitor to recognizing that he has to be a resident in this new country:

> *He [Chi-Quing's dad] said I would stay from August to December. I thought it would be a vacation. At first, I thought that this country was very nice...I feel strange why we [his family] have to live here, no friends, cannot comprehend people's English. I feel like a dumb person who cannot communicate. Only at home, I feel I am not.*

A lack of local information also made him feel that he had to depend on his father's friend in the first few months.

> *We wanted to apply for health insurance, driving license and phone, but he [his father's friend] said we were not eligible for them...We believed in his words because this is not our [his family] country and we are not familiar with the law.*

Chi-Quing also experienced a change when he transferred from the ESL program to a public high school. He found that he was unable to catch up with the school work. Although four months of English training had helped him increase his ability to converse with Canadians, his English was not proficient enough to allow

him to follow his teachers' instructions in regular classes. He enjoyed the company of other students and had good relations with his teachers, but he was bored with the school subjects. As a result, he avoided going to classes whenever he had the chance. Later, it was determined by Chi-Quing and his teachers that he should transfer back to the ESL program of the high school. With the transfer was completed though, he continued to skip classes and would not attend the school at all when his parents were back in Taiwan. In the end, he had to drop out of school. The parents were not aware of their son's truant behaviour until they received his report card. Chi-Quing explained the reasons why his parents did not notice his behaviour at school:

> *In Taiwan, teachers would phone my parents right after I skipped the class. Here is different. They would phone after finishing the classes. I am usually the one who answered the phone at home...My parents do not speak any English, so I think they cannot know that I skipped classes, anyway.*

Chi-Quing tried to re-enter another high school and a college, but did not stay long in either school. Chi-Quing told me that his father would like him to pursue a college degree at least. He said that his parents did not put as much pressure on his school work in Taiwan as they did in Canada. Although he complained, his parents repeated the same requests. Chi-Quing eventually agreed that he would go back to school again to please his parents.

> *My parents felt that each of us [his siblings] should go to university or college so as to find a good job in Taiwan...I studied for my parents*

because I do not want them [the parents] to lose face in front of their friends. I was not interested in studying and my parents always have to tell me that it was time for doing homework.

Except for the school part, Chi-Quing was content with his life, especially the aspect of friendship. After the experience with his parents' friend, he felt that making local friends was important because they could provide him with important information.

[Being] Without friends is like without a hand. When you have friends, you can ask them where to go [asking for help].

Although he likes his friends from Edmonton and would spend lots of time going out together with them, he felt that they are different from the friends he had in Taiwan. He said:

My friends were usually older in Taiwan... they were usually above the age of twenty...I feel strange to be with younger friends. Instead of learning from them, I have to teach them, it's a role change [for me].

Although Chi-Quing would like to make friends from a variety of cultural backgrounds, he said that most of his friends are from either Taiwan or from Hong Kong. A few of his other friends are from eastern countries, such as Korea and Vietnam. He said that the closeness of culture is a major reason because he shares similar values and custom with Chinese and other easterners. He did not think that language was a barrier to making friends because he could talk to his eastern friends in English.

I did not attempt to make western friends...My western friends were usually from classes...Maybe it is related to my personality and culture.

Coming to Canada represented an opportunity for Chi-Quing to meet people and have the experience of contacting other cultures. He feels no conflicts living in two cultures because he is close to the Chinese culture here in Canada.

Chi-Quing said that growing up has given a new meaning to his life. From the day he reached eighteen, he felt that he has become an adult. He said that the society had set up many rules for minors and now he no longer worries about violating them. Although he admitted that he was still not mature enough to take all responsibilities yet, he really enjoyed the feeling of being treated as an adult by his parents and friends.

I can make my own decisions and need not to ask my parents' permission. It feels good to be grown up. [I] can do anything I want. Before that, I only could stay at home, doing nothing.

Besides, he felt that his growing up in Canada made his parents accept some behaviours which would not be tolerated in Taiwan.

Dad said a good child should not smoke, play pool and dye the hair...These behaviour have become acceptable to my parents after coming to Canada...For example, I could tell dad that I would go out to play pool. He would say yes.

Chi-Quing felt that his parents did not approve of his choice of making friends. If they could, they would not allow him to hang out with his friends and would try to

separate him from them. Chi-Quing did not want to upset his parents, but he also does not want his parents to interfere his life.

I think that I should have my own circle of friends.

Asked about his future plan, Chi-Quing said that he has no clear plan, but he would prefer going back to Taiwan after receiving his Canadian citizenship. His parents would also prefer that he returns to Taiwan in spite of the fact that he would have to serve in the army.

I was much happier in Taiwan. I felt the transportation was convenient there...Chinese culture is more important to me [than Canadian] if I am asked to choose one culture.

He felt that he is not a Canadian yet, and wants to go back to the country where he grew up.

This is my second country...If I cannot find a job here, of course I have to return to Taiwan and make money there. I will come here for vacation.

The experience of not living with his parents since the age of thirteen has left him accustomed to living without his parents. Chi-Quing reported that the parents' absence has had no strong impact on his relationship with his parents or on his life.

According to his description, his other siblings also left home at a young age.

[In Taiwan] My brother and I both lived at school dorms. There were only my parents at home. Sometimes we would go home on the weekends.

I was almost absent for a month. I would stay in my friends' place.

He continued on the subject of not returning home on weekends:

Of course, they tried to find me everywhere. But I sometimes stayed with my friends, sometimes stayed in the pool halls, sometimes in the Karaoke, they could not find me at all.

In Canada, Chi-Quing's independence was even stronger. During the time when his parents were absent, he did not miss them. Now, he hopes that they can go back to Taiwan as frequently as possible. He does not want his parents to stay here because they would limit his activities. He felt that the parent-child relationship remains intact although he was not physically close to his parents. Sometimes he would think of his parents when he wants them to make food for him. Otherwise, he is happy with his life without his parents.

Chi-Quing felt that he was not able to achieve his parents' goal: continuing through to advanced education. He is unsure what his future might be. He is eager to go back to Taiwan because that is the place where he grew up and where he felt strongly connected to. After three years in Canada, he still feels that he does not belong here.

I do not know about my future. The most important thing is working and making money. It depends, if I can find a job here, I may stay but my English is not good enough.

Toward the end of the interview, I asked how he would define "good adjustment" to a new culture. He gave me his definition as follows:

...daily life, you feel good about anything, like weather, friends, those who surround your life, you have to know the customs there and react to it.

He felt he has adjusted well to Canada because he has settled into a daily routine. Even though he admits that he does not contact the local culture on a deep level, and most of the time he is in the Chinese culture, he said he is satisfied with that. When I asked him what suggestion he would give to those Taiwanese teenagers who are in a similar situation to his, he recommended that taking ESL is very important at the beginning.

> *I feel that if they just come from Taiwan and have no foundation in English, they should take an ESL program. It would be easier when going to classes raise your confidence and enhance your interest in learning more English.*

The interview ended after two hours when he did not want to continue. I was not able to locate him to review the transcripts of this interview. His sister told me that he had not been at home for months and the family was not able to trace his location.

Ming-Nan

Background.

It was during the summer of 1997 when I first met Ming-Nan. In a routine phone conversation, my key informant told me that he just made a new friend from a summer school program and would like me to see him . I said " Yes ". The next day, Ming-Nan and my key informant stopped over at my residence and we spent some time chatting. At that time, we only talked about his school life. It was during another gathering that we began a discussion about Chinese parenting. He voluntarily revealed the fact that his parents did not live in Edmonton with him and his brother. Coincidentally, from this discussion, I found out that he and Chi-Quing (interview 1) were acquaintances. From time to time, their mothers visited each other. It is common that these parents are close to each other in Edmonton. Difficulties speaking English limits their ability to integrate into western society and as a result, families bond together as a united group to provide mutual support and to share resources.

Ming-Nan was the second participant from Edmonton. He agreed to participate in this study because he thought to be interviewed by a researcher would be a "cool thing". The interview was unable to begin until his mother returned to Edmonton to give consent. Before the interview was conducted, I took the opportunity of asking the mother some questions. In our short talk, she expressed her regret in sending Ming-Nan to Canada. In the past few years, she felt that there was a growing gap between she and her son. Ming-Nan no longer shared his feelings or emotions with

her. She had no access to his thoughts and also did not know why her nice son had developed a hostile attitude toward her. She hoped that after this interview, Ming-Nan would open a communication channel to her and thus improve their relationship that has been full of conflict.

The interview was conducted in Ming-Nan's house at the mother's request. The mother was not present during our interview. I received both Ming-Nan's and his mother's consent before the interview questions were asked. My impression about Ming-Nan at that time was that he was quite concerned about his public image and the issue of losing face among his peers.

Ming-Nan's story of coming to Canada.

Unlike the other teenagers (except interview 6) in this study, Ming-Nan was the one who initiated the idea of moving to Canada in his family. At first, his parents disagreed with the idea of letting him stay alone in a new country. Later they changed their minds and decided to immigrate to Canada because they found that Ming-Nan was determined about his decision. He chose to reside in Edmonton where his aunt lives.

Ming-Nan said the two common factors of escaping obligatory army service in Taiwan and from the pressure of education system did not push him to leave Taiwan. Ming-Nan's reason for coming to Canada was unique and very personal. Here is his response to the question:

I thought that my friends would admire me when I return to Taiwan with a

Canadian university degree.

So in the summer of 1994, he came as a dependent landed immigrant. The parents flew back to Taiwan after they settled Ming-Nan in with his aunt. With his parents' return to the homeland, Ming-Nan was going to turn fourteen and would have been finishing his first year of junior high school in Taiwan. Since then, his mother has travelled between Edmonton and Taiwan periodically. His father would come to visit him twice a year. In 1995, he moved into his parents' new house, together with his cousin. Ming-Nan's brother who previously resided in Vancouver later came to Edmonton. These two brothers had not seen each other for many years before Ming-Nan immigrated to Canada.

Ming-Nan started talking about his school and the differences he perceived between the two school environments. His feelings about attending Canadian classes in the first few months were :

> *During the first three weeks, I would keep on looking at the clock and went home as soon as I finished my classes. During the school's lunch period, I would also prefer being alone...I fear staying at school because I could see students fight in the classroom.*

He began to make some progress very soon at school :

> *After a few months, I started making friends. I went out with my friends. I listened to their conversations. Now if you ask me whether I go home early or not, I would tell you that I prefer being out with my friends.*

Ming-Nan described himself as an easy-going person and usually needs little effort to

making friends. He told me of his experiences of making friends :

> *They [his friends] would approach me first...Because it is a small school, students tend to know other students quickly from attending different subjects. And to tell you the truth, sometimes they would know me before I met them...Or they would initiate a conversation, you know, in front of the lockers.*

English, in his opinion, is not a barrier of adjusting to the new life.

> *I did not speak good English but I talked to them [friends] slowly and they listened to me patiently.*

Actually, he emphasized that his school is very " White " and he felt very comfortable with it.

In addition to school and friends, he stated that he had no problems in other aspects of his life. He thought himself to be very adaptable under any situations. The following is his comment on adjustment to a new place :

> *It is like if you throw a person into the swimming pool, he will not die despite the fact that he cannot swim. One way or another , he would try to get out of the pool.*

Ming-Nan said that he enjoyed his life in Edmonton, especially in the summer time. Usually after school, he would spend time loitering with his friends around a mall. Otherwise, he would go biking in his neighbourhood by himself. The fragments of his memories about life in Taiwan were not pleasant. As far as he could recall, life was only focused on school and homework.

However, his mother's regular return visits to Edmonton could sometimes ruin his pleasure in Edmonton. The lack of freedom and return to rigid schedules had the strongest impact on his life. His mother required him to go home right after his classes or sometimes she would pick up Ming-Nan from school. He strongly disliked being treated like a young child and having his activities controlled. Going home suddenly became a duty and was not relaxing.

During the process of our interview, I observed that he constantly checked whether his mother eavesdropped outside his room. Ming-Nan explained to me that his mother was very concerned about his selection of friends, especially female friends. Sometimes, she could become so nervous that she would filter his calls first before he was allowed to talk to his friends. He gave one example to demonstrate how his mother's interference could sometimes embarrass him in public :

> *She has already been to school three times in this month. And each time she needed a Chinese teacher to interpret her message...Today, she went to school again to get my calculator back. I lost it during the final exam. She was not happy at all when I told her that I had to pay sixty dollars...She went to school and got one calculator for me, but that was not mine. I did not like her behaviour at all... I always thought that requiring assistance from my parents to deal with my school business was an extreme matter of losing face.*

As a result of his mother's over-protection, Ming-Nan has rarely revealed his personal feelings to her. He understood that she is on his side, but he figured that the

protection should be more moderate.

I do not want to be submissive to her... I do not want give in to the authority.

Although Ming-Nan has spent more time with his mother and has not seen his father often in these years, he feels a stronger connection with his father than his mother. The following is his reason for the perceived closeness to his father :

We both are men... She does not know what I am thinking of inside at all.

He said that his father would have stayed longer if his employer had allowed for a longer vacation.

Ming-Nan admitted that he did miss his parents a lot during their first absence from Edmonton, but he overcame any feelings of homesickness very soon. From time to time, he wished that they could have spent more time here with him. However, he recognized that the parent-child relationship is no longer the same as it had been back in Taiwan. His parents had been unable to accept the changes he has gone through. In turn, he no longer wanted to conform to his parents' expectations. He wants to be himself. He felt that he is almost an adult and should not be attached to his parents. He did not think that the absence of either parent has had any effect on his adjustment to Canada. He said :

I tend to forget. I will let the past [his parents' absence] go away. Why leave it in my mind ?

He was content with the long distance parent-child relationship at present.

As Ming-Nan brought up the topic of growing up, I asked him about his feelings

toward growing up. He defined the meaning of growing up before answering my question. He said growing up is :

One can handle one's things, such as working and making money. Reaching 18 also means growing up. Also, I think that a grown-up person should have his own opinions and not be led by his parents.

Ming-Nan felt that he had enough abilities to solve his problems, but he may seek assistance from his parents.

I am still in the process of growing up, but I am not at the end yet.

There had been changes in Ming-Nan's inner world. He has became tolerant of some behaviors which he could not accept in the past. He distinguished most activities as bad or good deeds. For example, as a younger boy he felt that a nice student should not pierce his body, wear rings and drink alcohol, but he does not mind any of them now. Another change he detected was his growing defensive position towards people. He explained that this is a result of witnessing school violence in Edmonton. He had not been threatened or blackmailed, but he felt that he had to be cautious of his school mates to prevent this from happening.

Ming-Nan also talked about how he perceived these changes :

I woke up one day and found that I had changed. Those things which I thought wrong suddenly become right, such as speeding in a car. I strongly disagreed with such behaviour before, but it is all right for me now...It is a frightening feeling.

Ming-Nan felt that the changes he has gone through may have some effect on

his relationship with his parents, especially with his mother. He said that she has became more strict with him than she had been back in Taiwan. Because Canadian schools do not take on many responsibilities to discipline students as do schools in Taiwan, his mother has needed to apply Taiwanese ways to monitor his life here in Canada. Back in Taiwan, Taiwanese parents expect that schools and society will help to monitor the children's manners and school performance.

On the one hand, he liked his mother to be in Edmonton so she could manage the household by cooking and doing laundry. On the other hand, he did not want to be deprived of his freedom when his mother was in Edmonton. He commented :

> *If she had lived here with me, she would be used to my changes. Maybe she will not notice my changes [after moving to Canada]...Maybe she would have become open... Maybe I would be more conservative...I did not care for the old way [from Taiwan] which she applied to me anymore.*

Although Ming-Nan considered himself a very " Western " person, he said that he would always be a Taiwanese even after he got his citizenship. He loves Canada but thought that he would not have a promising career. He wants to return to Taiwan one day in the future and hopes to get a good job there.

Through the whole interview, I found that Ming-Nan's nature of integrating into groups easily seemed to play an important role in his adjustment. He felt comfortable with talking to local people, making Canadian friends and accepting new customs. He said :

> *I did not feel different from other people. I am just like any other*

immigrant.

He continued commenting on how to adjust to a new environment :

Do not let the environment influence you. A person does not need to assimilate: he can still get into the society. Keep your uniqueness.

Toward the end of the interview, I asked him to give suggestions to those Taiwanese teenagers who are in his situation. He said :

[Do] n*ot immerse yourself in making Chinese friends and getting in touch with Chinese culture [when you first arrive]... We [Taiwanese teenagers] remember the speaking and writing of Chinese, so do not fear that you will forget the mother language...Attend a small school. It would be easier to make friends... Do not feel intimidated by the act of practicing English. It is very important to maintain a busy schedule and to concentrate on the school work.*

The interview ended after we finished the conversation at that time, but there were some notes I would like to add here to make the story complete.

After the transcript was finished and sent to his place, I had a chance to talk to Ming-Nan on the phone. He had no problems with the content of our interview and said that he would be glad to answer any of my other questions. He was very busy with his grade 12 high school subjects. He wanted to get into univerity in 1999. His mother now lives in Edmonton most of the time and visits her husband in Taiwan during the winter time. On another day, I came across Ming-Nan's whole family in the airport while I was on my way back to Taiwan. His father thanked me for

conducting this interview as it had provided an impetus for the family to communicate. The parents had asked for Ming-Nan's approval to read the transcript. Following that, they had an open discussion which they had not had for a long time. The parents said that it definitely would take some time for all of them, but at least they had started the communication process.

Zheng-Xiong

Background.

Zheng-Xiong is my key informant's best friend who resides in Richmond, B.C.. The name had been frequently brought up when my key informant talked about his life in Vancouver. Zheng-Xiong was described as a quiet and shy person, but a loyal friend whom my key informant could share secrets with.

Zheng-Xiong and I did not see each other until the second day after my arrival in Richmond. I remembered that we had a pleasant conversation in a Chinese food court of a Chinese shopping mall. Although we have never met prior, he seemed comfortable talking to me about his family and school. During the lunch time, I explained the purpose and the nature of my study to him. Later, we went to the Richmond Public Library, a quiet environment for recording our interview.

Zheng-Xiong's story of coming to Canada.

1998 was Zheng-Xiong's seventh year in Richmond. His reason for coming to Canada was similar to many other "Astronaut's Kids'" whose parents decided to immigrate to Canada, but later returned to Taiwan to continue their business. In Zheng-Xiong's case, his parents did not discuss the immigration with him and his two elder sisters. Soon after his parents got the approval from the Canadian government, Zheng-Xiong stopped his grade six education (he was between eleven and twelve years old at that time) in Taiwan and then flew to Vancouver with his family. Zheng-

Xiong's first impression of Richmond was :

> *It was so empty and big. After leaving the airport, it was like in an obsolete area...I hardly saw any high-rise buildings.*

Two months later, his parents returned to Taiwan to look after his ill grandfather. Zheng-Xiong and his two sisters were left in Richmond with his aunt. Afterwards, his father stayed in Taiwan to continue his work, but would visit his family occasionally during the course of a year. His mother had to fly between the two countries often, tending to the needs of her husband in Taiwan and the three children in Canada. Half a year later, the mother and three siblings moved out of the aunt's home and into a new house.

When asked about adjustment experiences over the past six years, Zheng-Xiong felt that his first year in Canada was the best period. Although he only spoke only a little English at that time, he did not fear talking to other students and teachers in class. He felt that he could accept any changes. The following is one example showing how he responded to language differences in his reading class. He recalled :

> *I remembered that I picked a book with many pictures but I could not understand the context at all...I pretended that I read it. Sometimes I laughed at the book so other students would think that I was really reading the book.*

This interesting memory reminded him of his happy time. Besides, he told me that he was able to make progress in learning English and new customs of a new country. His teacher also tried to help him adjust to school quickly. However, Zheng-Xiong

felt that the teacher should not have assembled new Taiwanese students together in the same class because such an action prevented him from talking to Canadian students. His reasons were :

> *It was not effective. It was like when you are drowning in water and suddenly, you found a piece of wood, you will grab it and won't let it go. You will not learn how to swim or try to swim by yourself.*

After graduating from the elementary school and getting into a junior high, Zheng-Xiong sensed that he entered another environment and needed to re-adjust himself again. This time, he lost his courage to confront the changes in his school life. He explained :

> *I transferred to another school district...I found that they [local students in class] had known each other since elementary school. It was really hard getting into their groups. It took time and energy... Besides, there were so many Taiwanese students in my school that it seemed easier to stay with them.*

Zheng-Xiong felt lonely at school. He did not approach non-Chinese students because he was ashamed of his poor English ability and felt that he would be rejected. Interestingly, even though he would have liked to make some Taiwanese friends, he avoided revealing the fact that he could speak Chinese. His failure of making friends from both groups seemed to be the result of his self-defensive attitude. He described :

> *This was a strange and new environment to me. I did not dare contact it...I could understand what they said, but pretended that I did not. I wanted to*

protect myself. I put on a mask.

The phenomenon of an increasing number of Chinese students in Richmond also had some effects on Zheng-Xiong's school life. He noticed that over eighty percent of the students in ESL classes were Chinese. There were only a few non-Chinese students. A few of them were from other Asian countries, such as Japan and Korea and the others were from European countries, such as Germany. Such a dense Chinese population in high school not only limited his opportunities for practicing English but also stopped him from integrating into the local society. He said :

> *The [Taiwanese] parents found out that their teenage children were not competitive enough under the regular education system, but they still wanted their children to proceed to advanced education.*

During the interview, Zheng-Xiong repeatedly told me how he regretted extending the length of his ESL classes. He felt that he did not make any progress in those two years. He sometimes went to class late and most of time, he did not finish his homework. He gave one scene of a typical ESL class :

> *We had to turn in assignments. Some students copied the homework from others so they still got good marks. I was too lazy to do so. As a result, my school marks dropped a lot...You could hear students talking in Chinese in class.*

Although Zheng-Xiong experienced various failures in these years, he did not think that the act of immigrating to a new country should be held responsible for, or blamed for his difficulties. He felt that it was his lack of persistence to succeed in his

new life. His life in Taiwan might have been similar to that in Canada. Although Taiwanese society encourages students to study hard, Zheng-Xiong said that most people only focus on excellent students and ignore average students like him. If he were to return to Taiwan, he might receive lots of attention and pressure from his parents but it would also take him a long time to catch up with other students' work. On the other side, he had not performed well at Canadian schools. He felt that he was in the middle of two cultures but was not able to comprehend either culture. Besides, he was not good at writing Chinese and at speaking English. As a result, he felt very negative about himself. He also talked about his inability to manage his time and therefore, he wasted a lot of his valuable time. For instance, he said :

> *I finished my summer school at noon. Returning home, I would start playing computer games all night because my mother was back in Taiwan for a full month...I also watched Chinese TV programs. I did not watch English programs.*

Zheng-Xiong mentioned little about his parents in our conversation. It seemed to me that they had a distant relationship. As far as he could remember, he and his parents would never sit down and talk. They might sometimes ask about his school work, but rarely cared to inquire about his personal life. When Zheng-Xiong became a teenager, he would try to start the conversation with his parents but his efforts were usually futile. After several trials, he gave up and tried to get used to such a parent-child relationship. The following was his interpretation of his mother' definition for loving a child :

My mother said that loving a child is to provide him with food, shelter and clothes. She told me, " Why you think that I do not love you ? I gave you what you want. "

Zheng-Xiong depicted his father as a very traditional Chinese man. The father had few conversations with his family. Sometimes when the father wanted to inquire about Zheng-Xiong's life in Canada, he would not directly talk to Zheng-Xiong but would go through his wife to retrieve the information he wanted. Zheng-Xiong thought that this could be a cross-generation habit because he saw his grandfather communicating with his father the same way as his father with him.

Zheng-Xiong said that his mother has changed since the family moved to Canada. He felt that she was not very happy staying in Canada because of the increased responsibilities of taking care her husband and three children split between two countries. Back in Taiwan, she was a wife and a mother. In Canada, she had to play both parents' roles. Besides, she had to learn how to communicate in English, to drive a car and to maintain the house. When Zheng-Xiong's school marks were not good enough, his mother would also be blamed by her husband. From one viewpoint, this new dynamic allowed him to re-examine his role of being a growing-up son. He said :

I would like to encourage her to be happier, but most of time I did not know how to do it.

Zheng-Xiong's parents' absence seemed to have some effects on his life. He did not feel isolated because his sisters and other senior family members were usually

around him. Besides, his parents would arrange one female relative to look after the children's needs when both of them were away. Except for the first separation from his parents, he did not feel lonely or miss his parents when they returned to Taiwan. However, Zheng-Xiong had better supervision from his parents during their stay in Canada. Sometimes he would experience a feeling of boredom so he would leave the house and stay outside late. He seldom phoned his parents to tell them how bored he was in the house by himself because he had learned that his parents would blame him for not studying hard enough and would refuse to hear the real reason. It was Zheng-Xiong's hope that one day his parents would spend time listening to his inner feelings. He also would like them to teach him how to deal with interpersonal relations instead of focusing on his school work all the time.

When Zheng-Xiong was willing to reveal more of his inner world, I gradually discovered his reason for isolating himself at school. His shyness and lack of confidence may explain his hesitancy of joining a new group. Therefore, even within Chinese groups, he would be satisfied to listen to their conversations and not try to join them. However, his earlier experiences of being teased and attacked physically by some students both in Taiwan and in Canada might have a bigger impact on his interactions with other students. In Taiwan, he was teased about his appearance while in class. He was not able to make close friends from school because his school marks were not excellent. In Canada, he was attacked verbally and physically at school because of his poor English. He thought that he had insufficient skills and therefore, he could not differentiate between good and bad people. In the following paragraph,

Zheng-Xiong described how he felt negative about himself after being attacked by a local student in grade eight :

> *I was beaten. I could fight back but I did not want to hurt the other person so I stopped. But the other person continued attacking me. I felt hurt but I dare not fight back...Sometimes I would be thrown by them [local students] because my English is not good enough...Why? Did I look like I wanted to be attacked?*

Although Zheng-Xiong blamed his poor English and his looks for leading to the unwanted violence at school, being alone at school at all times could make him become a target for some students. In addition, his not fighting back and not making reports to teachers might have made these students continue to take advantage of him.

Zheng-Xiong had a pessimistic view of his future. He said that he would not be successful either in Taiwan or in Canada. If he returned to Taiwan, it would take him a long time to establish new connections. Staying in Canada was not a good option as well. He felt that he had not integrated into Canadian society. As a result, it would be very difficult for him to compete with local people in this country. He figured that it might take him another few years to find out what his future plan would be like.

When our conversation proceeded to the discussion of growing up, Zheng-Xiong found it hard to answer the question. In his eyes, the meaning of growing up would vary in different cultures. It could mean maturity, independence or a person's ability to comprehend approved behaviours in society. Then he explained why it was difficult to become a grown-up person. He said :

You have to be deliberate, reading people's minds and reacting to them.

You have to observe but do not exhibit your real feelings to them.

In the middle of two cultures, he felt it very confusing to be a grown-up person because he had to switch constantly from the Canadian standard to the Chinese standard. Sometimes he was unable to find an adequate way to express his feelings. For example, he said :

You need two kinds of masks. When a westerner asked you whether you wanted food or not, you could give him a direct answer: Yes or no. For Chinese, you have to say no even though you like the food. You have to make excuses, such as I have it at home or I do not want to bother you...It depends. Some people could accept this way, but some could not.

When we were near the end of the conversation, I asked him for his definition of adjusting to a new environment. He said :

Contacting the local society...Feeling comfortable. It means no obstacles and no danger so you can continue growing up...Spending as much time as you could with local people and learn to use the same way as local people do to solve your problems.

In his opinion, it would be easier for a very young child to adjust to a new environment because this child would accept new changes faster. Older children tend to stay in a environment with which they are familiar and also do not attempt to learn a new culture. He said if he had to move to another country now, he would be very scared of the new culture.

The second interview was conducted three months after our first interview. From our twenty minutes conversation on the phone, Zheng-Xiong voluntarily revealed more information about his family. He told me about his father's work and his parents' relationship. He also told me his feelings about the past six years. He felt sorry for himself because he was not able to adjust to Canada at the beginning of his arrival. He regretted that he had not studied hard in school. Now he was nineteen years old and still struggling with his grade twelve work. We also talked about his recent life. He told me that he was taking his last subject from grade twelve and wished that he could be accepted by a Vancouver college in 1999. At the end of our second conversation, he expressed that reading the transcript was a new experience. He was not sure whether the interview would help my study or not, but at least, it provided him a chance to review his adjustment progress in the past six years.

Yen-Zon

Background.

Yen-Zon was the fourth participant in my study. He and Jian-Ren, the seventh participant, are siblings. I decided to recruit Jian-Ren because I was not able to receive further information about Yen-Zon's family and his adjustment experiences from the interview. Since Jian-Ren was willing to share his adjustment experiences with me, it seemed that putting their two stories together would add depth to their stories of coming to Canada.

I had never met the two brothers until a few days after my arrival in Vancouver. My key informant's mother introduced them to me as her husband's friends' children. Later during the interview, I found out how these two families were acquainted as the two fathers had known each other since elementary school in Taiwan. In spite of their having lost contact with each other for many years, the two men became reacquainted in Canada.

Yen-Zon and his three other brothers resided in their parent's house in Vancouver. Before the interviews were conducted, Yen-Zon, Jian-Ren and I went for supper together. During the mealtime, we talked about their schools, the city of Vancouver and their plans of returning to Taiwan. Two days later, I returned to the house and interviewed Yen-Zon first. One week later, I went back and interviewed Jian-Ren.

Through my conversation with Yen-Zon, I noticed that he looked uneasy,

especially while talking about his family and his personal feelings. I also found that he often did not respond to questions or he would nervously laugh as I approached the end of questions. Most of his answers were very short as well.

Yen-Zon's story of coming to Canada.

By the time I interviewed Yen-Zon, it had been eight years since he left Taiwan. In the past eight years, he had first resided in Los Angeles, California in the United States for four years and then had moved to Vancouver, B. C., Canada. Either on the way from Taiwan to L.A. or that from L.A. to Vancouver, Yen-Zon said that he and his brothers had not received any signals about moving from his parents in advance. For the first move, he hardly had any impression because he was only eight years old. He could only remember that his parents told them that it would be a short stay when travelling to the States. However, when his parents returned to Taiwan, he realized that he and the other three older brothers (the eldest is five years older than he is) would remain in the new country. At that time, they lived with two older cousins who went to university and also had similar experiences to Yen-Zon's. Over the ensuing four years, the parents would go to visit their children in the States. When Yen-Zon was about twelve years old, his parents decided to immigrate to Canada because they found that their children could not receive permanent resident status from the United States government. Again, Yen-Zon and his brothers moved to another country without being given any time to prepare for the second departure.

Yen-Zon and his brother's stories of going to Los Angeles were very different

from the other stories in my study. Prior to the departure of the four brothers to Los Angeles, their parents had not received student visas for the sons from the United States government. They only had visitor visa. Without receiving further details from Yen-Zon, I was not able to decipher how these four brothers had been able to reside in Los Angeles. However, Yen-Zon's case was not a new phenomenon in the States. He said that there are many other young Taiwanese teenagers illegally residing in the States without proper visas. Like Yen-Zon's parents, those parents hoped that their children would be able to stay long enough to became American landed immigrants or citizens one day in the future.

According to Yen-Zon's description of his adjustment experiences, the process of moving from Taiwan to North America seemed to have little effect on his daily life. He did not experience the feeling of homesickness because of being constantly surrounded by his brothers and cousins. The second move from the Unites Stated to Canada was less difficult for him because of the similarities between the two cultures. Besides, he was again surrounded by his brothers and many other relatives in Vancouver.

When asked to share his adjustment stories, Yen-Zon expressed that he could not remember any particular experiences. He said that he had a repetitive routine. The schedule was always the same: going to school, playing sports after school, doing his homework, watching TV or sleeping. At school, Yen-Zon would spend some time with his Chinese friends during recess and lunch time. He explained that all of his friends were Chinese because there was a high percentage of Chinese students

in his school. He felt that this was a common phenomenon across most Vancouver high schools. Therefore, he and other students only spoke English in class and would switch to Chinese after class. Yen-Zon thought that language was not a barrier from his making friends because he had friends from Hong Kong or other countries of origin.

Friendships played an integral part in Yen-Zon's adaptation to North American countries. By developing new friendships, he felt that he could learn how to adjust to the new culture and to interact with other people quickly. He said :

> *As soon as I made my friends, I no longer had the feeling of entering a new environment...Friends could tell me local news and customs...We talked together and helped each other with our school assignment.*

In Yen-Zon's eyes, helping a new student adjust to the school environment was a natural behaviour. He felt that by doing so, he was able to provide assistance to reciprocate for the help he had received from other students. The following statement shows how he supported a new student in his class :

> *I generally would not approach students...Sometimes I would, though. When a new Taiwanese student sat beside me, I would explain new customs to him or introduce him to our groups.*

Other than discussing school work or playing sports, Yen-Zon rarely joined his friends' activities. He told me that he would prefer staying at home than going out with them.

In our conversation, Yen-Zon emphasized that he had no adjustment problems

in any aspects of his life. He never felt alone either in L.A. or in Vancouver because he always had his family to look after him when his parents were not in Canada. Besides, in his family, each child was trained to manage his personal matters from a very young age. Therefore, living in a new country was not a challenge for him.

In spite of constant separation from his parents over the past eight years, Yen-Zon felt that his relationship with the parents has changed little. As his parents usually went home so late that he was usually gone to bed, he said that the current situation is not much different from that before. In addition, he and his parents seldom communicate with each other. He also expressed that he did not have close relationships with his brothers. Sometimes, his eldest brother would provide support to him when necessary. However, the brother was young and needed to deal with new changes as well. He thought that moving to North America helped him to be independent and responsible for his own life. Yen-Zon did not resent his parents' constant absence in his growing years. He said that his parents had worked hard in Taiwan to support their children's economic needs in North America and therefore, had little time to be with their children. In the following sentences, he expressed his feelings about his parents :

> *I did not feel distant from my parents...Sometimes my parents would call and ask what I was doing. It [the relationship] should not be any different.*

Contrary to other participants' opinions, Yen-Zon thought that older children ought to adjust to a new environment faster than younger ones. His reason was that older children learned more how to react to people properly and also had better skills

to handle new changes than young children. However, in his next sentence, he said that age was not a factor to his own adjustment. He said :

I did not feel any difference from the States to here [Vancouver].

He did not explain the conflicts of age in his talk.

When the interview was near the end, Yen-Zon talked about his feeling about growing up. In his opinion, growing up means :

To understand the norm of society. Not to conduct foolish things.

He thought he was not grown up yet because sometimes he would not follow his parents' direction and made mistakes. When asked to provide examples of his previous errors, Yen-Zon kept quiet on this question.

To Yen-Zon, a person would have a good adjustment when he was able to :

be familiar with his surroundings and to feel attached to this place.

According to his experiences, a teenager would adjust well soon after getting used to the school environment. In the end of our conversation, he ended with the following comment as his suggestions to other teenagers :

I have never told others about my family. I did not tell them how to adjust to...They would talk about their experiences, but I would not.

After three months, I sent the transcript to Yen-Zon and hoped to get the second interview with him through the phone. It was not successful. I decided to close this case after two unsuccessful attempts to reach him.

Guo-Hui

Background.

In the summer of 1998, Guo-Hui and I first met in a Chinese radio station in Vancouver. He was introduced to me by a friend of mine who was a broadcaster at the station. Before the interview was conducted, I knew that Guo-Hui was eighteen years old. Over the past five years, his parents had primarily resided in Taiwan.

My friend was present during the conversation. Guo-Hui expressed that he would feel comfortable telling his story while my friend was in the same room. He was willing to participate in this study because he would like to experience the feeling of being interviewed. Our talk was conducted in a sound proof room in the radio station.

Guo-Hui's story of coming to Canada.

Guo-Hui and his parents made the decision to immigrate to Canada. They had all agreed that studying in Canada would provide Guo-Hui with a better opportunity for education than in Taiwan. Guo-Hui told me that his school work had usually ranked at the top of the class in Taiwan. However, the pressure to succeed in school had been so heavy that he had wanted to change to a less stressful school system.

From his talk, I found that Guo-Hui had been introduced to a western culture at an early age. He had been born in Hong Kong and had returned to Taiwan when he was very young. After he had reached school age, his parents registered him in an

American school in Taiwan. Guo-Hui felt that his English was well-established at that time. As a result, he was able to adjust to Canadian schools quickly. During his stay in Taiwan, Guo-Hui had lived with his grandmother.

At the beginning of his arrival in Vancouver, Guo-Hui was very excited because there were few school assignments in the school system. However, as time went by, he had felt frustrated because he found that his English was not good enough to compete with local students at school. Besides, he worried that his school work might fail because strict teachers' supervision from his past no longer existed.

Then Guo-Hui commented on the differences between his relationships with teachers in the two countries. He said that he was not as close to current teachers in Canada as he had been with teachers in Taiwan. In Taiwan, he would spend long periods of time with the same teachers as he would remain in the same classroom rather than moving from class to class and staying at school a long time. In Canada, however, the frequency of interaction with the same teacher was low. Guo-Hui did not feel attached to the teachers in Canada at all. In the following paragraph, Guo-Hui described the differences between two school systems. He said :

> *In Taiwan, teachers would arrange what you should read and study. You knew that you had to finish your homework and prepare for the next day's exams. Here [in Canada], teachers give students a lot of freedom. They do not check your homework. Well, maybe sometimes they do. They do not give students exams everyday...The pressure of studying hard was always there in Taiwan. Everyone helped you to study. You did have to think how*

to do it. Here, you have to rely on yourself.

Although his comment gave the impression that he preferred being in a highly disciplined school environment, Guo-Hui told me that he would stay in a Canadian school because he feared that he might be unable to proceed to advanced education in Taiwan. Failing school work would be a stigma for him and his family.

Guo-Hui also spoke about his impressions of his first high school. Initially, he needed to commute from West Vancouver to East Vancouver because there was no available vacancy in his resident district. While he felt excited about the new school life, going to this school was not a pleasant experience for him. Sometimes he did not dare walk into school from the main entrance because of other students' fights there. He was afraid that he could be attacked by these students. When he was able to transfer back to West Vancouver, he said that the new school environment was much better than the first one. Most students focused on school work and there was little school violence.

Except the first few frustrating months at school, Guo-Hui was content about his new life in Canada. His school marks improved. He had his own friends. After graduation, he was confident that he would be able to go to a reputable university. Although he was sometimes still aware of his lack English ability, he did not think that it would create obstacles in his future.

In addition to being a good student, Guo-Hui was a popular person among his friends. He could get along with most people, especially with girls at school. However, being attractive to the opposite sex generated hostile attitudes from his

male friends. In grade nine, he had only had a few male friends. After he had decided to join his male friends' groups and deliberately decreased the contact with his female friends, he was able to increase the number of his male friends. Guo-Hui said that now he can make friends from both groups without being isolated by his male friends.

From interviews with the other Taiwanese teenagers, I found that very few of them had Canadian friends. When I brought the issue to Guo-Hui, he pointed out to me that this was a very common phenomenon in Vancouver. He said that local students usually did not want to mix up with Chinese students and vise versa. In the following, he explained why these two groups were usually not together. He said :

> *Only a few Chinese children (those who were born here) would hang around with local children. It is very natural that Chinese are with Chinese. Besides, we [he and his friends] believed that local people do not welcome us...They [local people] thought that we took most good positions at school, lived in their good neighbourhood and drove nice cars.*

Like other teenagers in this study, most of Guo-Hui' friends were Chinese. He told me how he could identify whether a new student was from Taiwan or not by his physical features and his language. Once after both he and the new student found out that they were both Taiwanese, they would soon become friends. Guo-Hui said that he was willing to provide the new student with his assistance and refer the student to his groups. Here was one example of his making Chinese friends at school. He said :

> *I sat beside a black-haired student. He asked me, "Where are you from?" I answered, "Taiwan." Then he told other students, "He is from Taiwan*

(In Taiwanese language)." He later lead me to his group. Gradually, I would know more and more about this school and its students.

As for western friends, Guo-Hui expressed that he only talked to them in class because he was not used to chatting in English. As well, he felt that he was not able to describe his emotions in English as well as he could in his mother tongue.

Although Guo-Hui's parents and his teachers had not monitored his school work as he had wanted in these years, he had strict goals for himself and had set up high expectations for success. He had a clear goal for the future. Although he would sometimes hang out in Karaoke bars, play games and watch too much Chinese TV with his friends, he always knew that keeping good school marks was very important. He told me that he had never joined gangs or spent time speeding in cars. He did not want to be like some of his friends who had joined local gangs, dropped out of school and never returned to the school. He felt that such conduct would not only ruin a person's future but also the parents' efforts to raise the child. He explained why some of his friends would turn into "Bad Students". He said :

Most of them are international students. Their parents gave them whatever they wanted because the parents wanted to make sure that their children would not have any unmet needs that could take away the child's concentration on studying. But when you have money and a car, you would make all kinds of friends and go wherever you wanted. If your friends only asked you to go out for fun, you certainly would change into a bad student.

Guo-Hui said that his parents had provided him with anything he had wanted, but

make all kinds of friends and go wherever you wanted. If your friends only asked you to go out for fun, you certainly would change into a bad student.

Guo-Hui said that his parents had provided him with anything he had wanted, but that he had not adopted his friends' pattern because he had not agreed with their behaviour and also he had thought that such a life style was a waste.

In our conversation, Guo-Hui constantly told me how much he missed Taiwan. He felt that there were more options for restaurants and entertainment in Taiwan than there were in Canada. Although he liked Vancouver, he felt that he was living in a narrow and limited environment. He felt bored. However, when I asked him about going back to Taiwan, he said that he would rather tolerate a boring life than live in such a competitive environment. He told me that if he returned to Taiwan now, he would not have time to enjoy his life because he would be approaching the entrance exam time for university. He said that his schedule would be like the following :

I got up at six, went to school at seven, stayed there around four. Then I went to a cram school and stayed there till eight o'clock. I went home, had supper, and prepared tomorrow exams. My life would be always the same.

After coming to Canada, Guo-Hui felt that he had more time for himself. When in Taiwan, he needed to work hard for school work all the time and therefore, had little time to go out with his friends. Besides, his grandmother wanted him to stay home so he could keep her company. In Canada, his parents had allowed him to go

out often. Guo-Hui felt that going out with friends was necessary in a new environment so he could become a social person and develop the opportunity of making friends.

In spite of staying alone in Canada most of the time, Guo-Hui felt that he was not an independent person. He still relied a lot on his parents. He said :

> *I felt that my parents had protected me too much. I was unable to deal with new changes. Both of my parents could speak English well. As a result, I had not needed to be like other children who had to handle everything by themselves. My mother solved all the problems for me...My life here was like that in Taiwan...I had not even known how to pay the bills and how much the bills were.*

Guo-Hui's parents did their best to make his life as comfortable as they could. Although he appreciated their efforts, he usually felt bored staying in the house. To decrease the feeling of boredom, he would invite his friends to stay overnight, play games, or watch videos together when his parents were in Taiwan. Guo-Hui did not like returning to the big empty house, but he was gradually getting used to living by himself.

A promising future was very important to Guo-Hui. He said that it was hard to ignore the constant pressure from his parents and relatives because they liked to compare their children's school performance. If he was not able to enter a reputable university, his parents would lose face and so would he. He figured that he would stay in Canada most of the time in the future to complete his education. However,

even after five years of residing in Canada with the probability of staying longer, Guo-Hui did not think that he would become a Canadian. He said :

My life style was very westernized, but I ate Chinese food... I could not deny my identity...I never felt that I am a Canadian.

Guo-Hui did not mention much about his family. I knew that he had an elder sister who also resided in the Greater Vancouver area but in a different city and one very young brother who attended the elementary school in Taiwan. Guo-Hui said that he and his mother usually discussed things together because he was the eldest son in the family. Although his father was not in Canada most of the time, he did not feel distant from him. Guo-Hui said :

I talked a lot with my father. We are both men. We have similar thoughts.

Guo-Hui said that he did not think he was grown up yet even though he was already eighteen years old. He felt that a grown up person should be the following :

You need to be responsible for yourself, including everything. You should do what you should do...For instance, after finishing university, you need to find a job.

Guo-Hui though that he did not meet his expectations of being a grown up person. He still needed time to think about his responsibilities.

In the end, we talked about his comments on adjusting to Canadian society. Guo-Hui felt that he had few adjustment difficulties even from the beginning of his arrival. Although his English was not good enough to catch up with the school work at first, he soon worked hard enough to halt his falling school grades. According to

his personal experiences, he felt that a person has a good adjustment in a new environment when the person has the following feelings.

You feel satisfied about yourself. You no longer want to improve.

Guo-Hui also suggested how others could adjust to a new environment. He said :

If you just arrive, you need to establish your foundation at school. The first year was the most important of your adjustment. If you could adjust well in that year, you would feel easy in the following years...Besides school work, you should try something different, such as making friends, playing sports, or something you have not done in Taiwan.

He felt that those teenagers who are in a similar situation like his should not use their parents' absence as an excuse for not studying. He said :

Some Taiwanese parents did not supervise their children even back in Taiwan. Some would be very strict until their children's lives are on the track. One way or the other, you will need to be responsible for yourself one day.

Our interview finished in one and an half hours. From time to time, my friend added some details of Guo-Hui's life which he did not include to our interview. Guo-Hui sometimes made comments about other Taiwanese teenagers. Sometimes he told me his feelings about the past years. However, he generally used his friends' stories to answer my questions. I decided to end our conversation because Guo-Hui was not interested in revealing anything more of his story.

After the interview was transcribed, I mailed the transcript to his address and

asked for a follow-up interview if the time was available to him. No reply was heard from him after our first interview had been conducted.

Chia-Ming

Background.

Chia-Ming was referred to me two weeks after my arrival in Vancouver. Initially, Chia-Ming was hesitant to participate in this study because he worried about the revelation of his identity when the story was released in public. I ensured him that his name and other information which might reveal his identity would be altered. He could also decide to delete any part of the transcript which he did not feel comfortable to share.

Chia-Ming was very willing to tell me his adjustment experiences once when I started the interview. Two and an half hours later, I had to stop our talk because Chia-Ming's mother wanted him to go home. It was a valuable interview. From Chia-Ming's talk, I learned what Home Stay students' lives were like (Home Stay program is set for international students who want to experience local people's daily life. Each student is billeted with a local family.). As well, he gave his perspective of Chinese students' adjustment in Vancouver. Our interview was conducted in his mother's friend's house.

Chia-Ming's story of coming to Canada.

Chia-Ming came to Canada in the winter of 1996. He was seventeen years old. He went to Nanaimo instead of Vancouver to study because his father thought that studying in a less Chinese populated area would help Chia-Ming concentrate on his

school work. Before Chia-Ming's family received their landed immigrant status from the Canadian government, he had stayed in Nanaimo eight months as an international student. Chia-Ming told me that he agreed with his father's decision because he did not want to serve in the army in Taiwan. In addition, he hoped to pursue further education after he entered Canadian high school.

In our conversation, Chia-Ming talked a lot about his life in Nanaimo. He remembered that soon after his arrival in Nanaimo, his Home Stay parents picked him up from the airport and drove him to their house. Chia-Ming said that he had many expectations for his home stay parents and the new school. However, two weeks later, he found out that the school and Home Stay parents were not as good as he had thought. The Home Stay parents usually left him alone in the house and seldom conversed with him. He did not feel like a part of this family, but was like a temporary visitor. He lost his excitement for moving to a new country and started missing his family and friends in Taiwan. He said :

> *I did not think that I had adjustment problems, but I felt strange. Suddenly, my parents, sister and friends were all gone from my new life...I felt odd when I needed to talk to someone...I cried forty minutes on the phone when my mother called me from Taiwan. There was nothing wrong in my life, but I just did not get used to the changes.*

Chia-Ming said that at the beginning, he had no friends. His Home Stay parents did not care for his feelings. They rarely talked to him unless he asked them to sign formal papers or started the conversations. Chia-Ming felt that if his Home Stay

parents could have helped him adjust to the new culture, he would not have experienced the first few weeks of depression. Consequently, he did not establish any attachment to his Home Stay parents after six months of staying together in the same house. Finally, Chia-Ming decided to move out and rent an apartment with his friends. During the two months, he spent most of his time with friends.

Before Chia-Ming became familiar with the new environment, he usually stayed at home when he was not at school. He felt that his new life was very routine. The schedule was always the same: commuting from school and his Home Stay parents' house. Here was his description about his life in Nanaimo :

> *I always saw the same people on bus, except bus drivers...There was no place to go in Nanaimo. I only found one twenty-four hours restaurant. Most stores closed at nine o'clock. I went home late because I did not know where to go.*

However, in spite of a distant relationship with his Home Stay parents and a boring new life, Chia-Ming said that staying in Nanaimo did help him improve his English rapidly. He said :

> *I did not have good school performance in Taiwan...Now I was in a new place. Nobody knew my past [school marks]...I studied very hard when I stayed in Nanaimo...They [his home stay parents] would not set up Chinese channels or learn Chinese just because I lived with them. If I wanted to survive in their world, I had to jump out from my old world.*

When Chia-Ming's parents got their status, he moved to Vancouver and lived

with his mother. All of a sudden, Chia-Ming found himself surrounded by many Chinese students at school. This finding disappointed him. He said :

> *Before I came to Canada, I always dreamt that I would be the only Asian student in class. There would have been many western students around me. They would be curious and asked me questions of my culture... It was totally opposite to my thought. Over eighty percent of students at school were Chinese. I hardly spoke English.*

Chia-Ming was also upset when he was not able to catch up with other grade eleven students' school work in Vancouver. He usually perceived himself as a fast learner compared to most Taiwanese teenagers when staying in Nanaimo. However, his school marks dropped a lot after transferring to a Vancouver high school. He felt that his self-confidence was severely damaged. He figured that not taking ESL classes in Nanaimo was the primary reason of his dropping school marks in Vancouver. He said:

> *My English was quite good in Taiwan. However, entering grade 11 without taking ESL classes became a very difficult task for me...I thought I was doing well in Nanaimo, but I found that actually I was far behind most students in Vancouver... I failed my grade 11 English...I would have had better marks if I took ESL at the beginning.*

When Chia-Ming transferred to the Vancouver high school, he was near the age of nineteen. After failing the subjects in grade 11, he was helpless and was not sure what to do for his school because he would not be allowed to stay in high school when he

was nineteen years old. As well, his school wanted him to wait one year before entering grade 12 because they did not have enough vacancy for students. In the end, Chia-Ming decided to drop out from his school and transfer to an adult college which allowed mature students to continue their high school subjects.

Chia-Ming told me that he liked his new school. In addition to continuing his education at an advanced level, he had close relationships with teachers. He especially liked their attitudes toward students. The teachers respected each student and allowed him/her to make decisions. He said :

> *My teachers not only taught students to study but also helped them to learn to take responsibilities...You made your decisions. You could study hard or fail the subjects.*

Chia-Ming in his talk kept on telling me how he appreciated the opportunity of coming to Canada. He usually thought that he would enter the army and then work for a menial job after his graduation from high school. He said :

> *I thought that I would not have a good future. After I graduated from high school in Taiwan, I could not enter a university...I never thought that one day I might attend a college or university...When my father allow me to come to Canada, I thought this would be an excellent chance. I could re-plan my future.*

Although Chia-Ming wished that he could have come to Canada at a younger age, he did not use it as an excuse for poor school marks. He disagreed with some Chinese immigrant teenagers' behaviour. Instead of valuing their opportunities, they wasted

their time and their parents' efforts. Chia-Ming said :

> *These teenagers remained in the old ways. They only went out with Taiwanese. They did not accept the new culture. They did not improve themselves. I did not want to be like them.*

Coming to Canada also allowed him to enjoy the other aspects of his life. Besides studying, he could go for outdoor activities. In Taiwan, when he participated in recreational events, he would be labelled as a lazy student because he did not spend all of his time studying. When asked to recall his life in Taiwan, Chia-Ming said that it always repeated the same. He said :

> *I went to school at seven and finished class at five o'clock. Usually, I stayed at school until nine o'clock at night for studying. Everyday was always the same.*

It seemed to me that Chia-Ming was eager to make western friends. He proudly told me that he had a close western friend from Nanaimo. However, to get along well in both Chinese and western groups was very challenging to Chia-Ming. At his school, these two groups usually separated from each other unless they were told to join together in class. He explained the reasons to me :

> *Language certainly is one factor. I also thought that the two groups looked down each other. Chinese students thought that local students did not study hard and they were not wealthy. Local students though that Chinese usually made lots of noise. They thought that Chinese students were snobbish. Besides, they disliked Chinese students taking away most good*

positions at school...Most local students thought that Chinese had poor English and did not want to talk to them.

He pointed out that the deliberate separation from both groups was very obvious. Here was his description of a class :

Teachers tried to mix up local student with Chinese, but still found that one group was all made of blond hair and the other was made of black hair.

He envied that some Canadian born Chinese could make friends from either group. Chia-Ming wished that he would be one of them one day.

When I asked Chia-Ming to describe his western friend, he became very excited. He enthusiastically talked about their activities: going camping, biking, swimming or hiking. He was very glad that he could have such a good friend. After moving to Vancouver, Chia-Ming invited his Chinese friends to go outdoors and participate in these activities. He was very disappointed that none of them was interested in his suggestion. Chia-Ming disagreed with his friends' activities. He said :

I did not like their hobbies. They did not participate in physical exercise. They just spent lots of money. For instance, they usually went shopping in the mall and played pool.

He felt that they did not have common interests. Chia-Ming said that if possible, he would like to leave his Chinese friends. As for now, he would still stay with them because he was not able to enter a group who had similar interests to his.

Chia-Ming had a clear plan for his future. For the short term goal, he would definitely finish his education first. After the first goal is accomplished, he might go to

Japan or China to develop his career. I asked him why he wanted to go to these countries, he answered :

> *I do not really know why. Maybe these are eastern countries...I did not want to stay in Canada when I am still young. The tax system in Canada is too high. Young people do not have motivation to work hard.*

He did not think of going back to Taiwan. He told me that if he returned to Taiwan, he still needed to serve in the army. It is the obligation that all males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five are required to enter the Taiwanese military.

In the last two years, Chia-Ming sensed that he changed a lot. He felt that he became more independent. In Taiwan, he usually solved his own problems and did not let his parents worry about him. Although he was not a hard-studying student and liked to hang around with his friends, he emphasized that he never joined gangs, took drugs or dropped out of his school. During his parents' absence in the eight months, he learned to cook, pay the bills, do the laundry and take care of his basic needs.

Chia-Ming said that the most significant change was his perception of family. Prior to his coming to Canada, he always treated his friends better than his family. Now he understands the importance of his family cherishes moment with them. In the following, he talked about how much he missed his grandmother :

> *I hoped that I could have spent more time with my grandmother, but I could not. Each time when she came, I was very happy. However, she could not stay long.*

He felt his changes also helped him improve his relationship with his parents. He was

more considerate of his parents' feelings about raising a child.

These changes also had effects on his self-image. Chia-Ming felt that he was brave enough to express his opinions in public and did not have to worry about being criticized. It was very common in Taiwan that a person would not be accepted when he made different comments from the majority. He was also pleased that his parents treated him as an adult after coming to Canada. The parents would give him advice but not make decisions for him. He proved to his parents that he was independent and responsible while they were away from Canada.

From the talk, my impression of Chia-Ming was that he was a direct person and liked to make comments on things that he disapproved. He worshiped the western style of living and advocated open communication. He was happier living in Canada because he no longer felt that he was different from his friends. He said :

> *In Taiwan, I was always concerned about other people 's opinions even when I did something right...I knew that I did not fit into Taiwanese society. My friends did so they were good students...I do not feel that way now. I was not ashamed of myself.*

When I told him my impression of him, he agreed with my words. Unlike some Chinese students who acted like westerners but actually they were still very conservative, Chia-Ming said that he was a very westernized person and would continue to be in the future.

Chia-Ming was the only teenager in my study who thought that he was grown up. He felt that growing up was a good thing because he could have more freedom,

but it came with more responsibilities. In the following paragraph, he talked about his feeling of growing up. He said :

> *You needed to take lots of responsibility...When I was in kindergarten, I was happier...Now you have to study, have to have girlfriends, and have to be careful about your talks. It is annoying... I missed my friends from a younger age. They did not take advantages of you. Now, I feel that my friends are using each other. They do not have sincere friendship.*

I also asked Chia-Ming how he knew that he was grown up. He answered :

> *How did I know that I have grown up? You compared to yourself...I knew what to do and what not to do.*

Taking responsibilities was always part of Chia-Ming' parents' discipline. His father often taught him to look after himself, especially after reaching the age of eighteen. He said that most Chinese parents did not give their children such a concept. Therefore, their children were still highly dependent on the parents and took it granted that their parents should meet their needs. Chia-Ming made a comment in the following :

> *I did not think that parents raising adult children was a good thing. It might sound good to the children, but it actually did not help them...Most of Taiwanese teenagers in Canada were from a reasonable economic background. They did not worry about their future. They thought that their parents would give whatever they needed, anyway.*

When talking about the feelings that his parents were absent in Canada, Chia-

Ming said that the first few weeks were not good for him. He described his eighteenth birthday in Nanaimo. He said :

> *My eighteen birthday was the most terrible one I have ever had...My father is a soldier and never used emotional words with me. On my birthday, he phoned me and asked me to take good care of myself because he and my mother were not in Canada. He said to me, "Go and buy yourself a birthday gift."...It was really a unforgettable experience.*

After getting used to the new environment, Chia-Ming no longer had a feeling of home sickness. He was very happy with his new life and new friends.

Chia-Ming felt that he had a better relationship with his parents than in Taiwan. He figured that if he was still in Taiwan, it would be hard to maintain a harmonious parent-child relation. He gave me his reasons. He said :

> *In Taiwan, I often had conflicts with my father. My father wanted me to study hard so I could have a better future. I was not a good student and my father was very upset about that.*

In addition to his moving to Canada, Chia-Ming thought that his growing up also had some influences on his relationship with his parents. His parents recognized that he was an adult and respected his choice. He commented on some teenagers' problems with their parents. Chia-Ming felt that these parents still applied the traditional parenting in Canada which he thought not adequate.

Adjusting to changes never created difficulties to Chia-Ming. He felt that Chinese parents should not over-protect their children. The children would learn in

their process of adjustment. He said that some teenagers could adjust faster than others because of their younger age when coming to Canada. He said :

> *The younger you were, the easier you could adjust to a new environment. Some older teenagers still preferred living in a Taiwanese environment because they were used to it.*

Chia-Ming thought that a person would have good adjustment if he could integrate in society fast. He said :

> *You needed to make some changes and integrate into the environment, such as changing your daily habit.*

He also thought that an easy-going personality could help a person adjust to a new place well.

In the end of our conversation, Chia-Ming gave his suggestions to other new Taiwanese teenagers. He said :

> *The environment is the most important in your adjustment. If you stayed in an all Chinese place, you would not adjust well at all....I would suggest that parents send their children to a less Chinese town or city...The parents created a good learning environment for children. Then it was up to children to accept it...For sure, the parents would need to confirm the safety of the new place.*

He would have stayed longer in Nanaimo to improve his English.

After the interview was finished, I thanked Chia-Ming for his candid talk. I was able to obtain a lot of information. I was glad to hear that he was optimistic about his

future and enjoyed his life in Canada. I talked to Chia-Ming again after the interview was transcribed. From our phone conversation, Chia-Ming still sounded very content about his recent life. He told me that he was in grade 12 and hoped to enter a university in 1999. He said that he had no opinions about the transcripts. He agreed that I could use all of his interview in writing his story. It seemed to me that this was a successful interview. This adolescent shared with me a lot about his own adjustment experience, his relationship with his parents and made comments on his friends' adjustment. I felt that he was adaptable to the new environment. Although he sometimes was upset about the changes, he would not let the feelings influence his later life. Besides, he could honestly express his good and bad feelings.

Jian-Ren

Background.

Jian-Ren was the last participant in my study. He is Yen-Zon's (the fourth interviewee) third eldest brother. The interview was conducted in his parent's house in Vancouver. It took one hour and ten minutes.

Jian-Ren'story of coming to Canada.

Jian-Ren moved to North America with his three other brothers. He was twelve years old when he moved from Taiwan to Los Angeles, California. On his second move from Los Angeles to Vancouver, B.C., Canada, he was sixteen years old. Jian-Ren told me why his parents had decided to immigrate to Canada after their four years of residing in the United States in the following paragraphs. He said :

> *My father had his business in the States. He tried to apply for our green cards from the United States government. However, at that time, there were already lots of people on the waiting list. My mother had her family in Canada so my parents thought that it might help to speed up the applying process in Canada...In the end, the Canadian government gave us our landed immigrant status first.*

I asked Jian-Ren to start his adjustment story from the earliest time that he could remember. He told me that he did not have a strong recollection of the first move because he was too young. For the second move, his parents had not discussed any

immigration matters with him or his other brothers before their departure. He said that on the second move, he was already sixteen years old. He had wished that his parents could have told him about moving to Canada at an earlier time so he could have prepared for changes for the new school environment. However, he added that in his family, the children usually just accepted their parents' arrangements. Even if he or his brothers did not accept their parents' decisions, his mother would still enforce their compliance.

Like his younger brother, Yen-Zon, Jian-Ren said that he did not have special feelings for the two moves. He had gotten used to North American culture in a short time and had not had any particular difficulties to deal with. After the brothers had been settled with two university age cousins in Los Angeles, Jian-Ren went to an elementary school and started his new life in the new country. Although his parents had left and returned to Taiwan, Jian-Ren did not feel depressed or miss his parents. He learned to be independent and to do household chores like the laundry and cooking. He did not find his new life in the States was different from that in Taiwan.

School work and making friends were also not difficult for Jian-Ren. In spite of his poor English at the time of his arrival in Los Angeles, he soon became fluent in the new language and was able to catch up with school work one year later. However, even though Jian-Ren had no problems in communicating with local students, he still felt more comfortable socializing with Chinese students. He told me that most ethnic students liked to stay with their countrymen because they shared the same languages. He said :

Because they, such as Mexicans spoke their mother language at home, they felt strange talking to you in English at school or going out. Speaking in your mother language is much easier to communicate with other people. You did not feel pressure of making mistakes.

Although most ethnic students preferred using their original languages, Jian-Ren said that in Los Angeles, teachers prohibited the students from doing so at school. It was different in Canada. The teachers would not try to stop ethnic students from conversing in their mother languages. Jian-Ren once attempted to learn Cantonese, one Chinese dialect widely used in southeast provinces of China, so he could talk to other Chinese students from Hong Kong. After finding out that his English got worse, he decided to stop learning Cantonese.

Jian-Ren did not talk much about his friends in our conversation. He said that he had a few friends from both the Chinese and western groups, but he was not very close to them. He sometimes went out and played sports with these friends. When asked about his feeling of making local friends, Jian-Ren did not think that it was a difficult challenge. However, he said that it was very common in Vancouver that Chinese and local students did not mix. Here was his observation from school. He said :

It was very hard for a Caucasian student to enter Chinese student groups unless he could speak Chinese...Chinese students did not want to isolate him on purpose but it was very natural that this student would sit there alone because he did not speak the same language.

Although it was significant at his school that ethnic and local students usually establish their common groups and remain within them, Jian-Ren seldom joined either group. He preferred being alone.

Jian-Ren said that his life was very routine. A typical day for him fell as follows: going to school, taking a nap in the afternoon, doing homework, making supper, and going to sleep. Sometimes he went out to play sports, or sometimes he stayed at home and did the housework. But when his mother was in Canada, Jian-Ren said that he had more time for himself because she could run the errands. In Taiwan, he had less time for recreation. He spent most of his time at school: going to school until five o'clock and then going to the cram school until eight o'clock at night. Usually after he went home and finished his homework, it was about time for going to bed.

Jian-Ren felt that his life was not as colorful as his friends'. These friends' parents were also not staying in Canada. As a result, they would often hang out together as a group. Jian-Ren did not want to spend time with them because they did not share common interests. Here was his comment on his friends' activities. He said :

> *Most of my friends were also "Astronauts' Kids". They went to bars, Karaokes. I did not like these places so I did not go with them.*

In addition to their different interests, Jian-Ren did not have surplus money to spend as his friends. He strongly disapproved of parents providing so much money and material goods to their children. He gave me one example how his friend wasted his parents' money. He said :

My friend was an "Astronauts' Kid". His parents thought that children should always had lots of money in case the children needed in emergency. My friend asked his parents to send one million dollars and his parents did send the amount of money he asked...He bought nine cars and lent them to his friends.

He felt that his friend did not understand the value of money and would not in the future if his parents kept on doing so. Jian-Ren said that some teenagers did not study hard for their school work because they knew that they could continue their parents' business and did not have to worry about their career in the future. Jian-Ren felt that he was not like his friends. He understood that he needed to work hard to acquire what he wanted.

One major change in Jian-Ren's life was that he had to learn how to manage housework. He said that in the past eight years, he and his brother took turns to do these errands. But if he were still in Taiwan, his mother would not let them do so many jobs. Jian-Ren felt that he had been given more responsibilities by his mother because she had usually asked him to help her do the housework since he was a young child. Otherwise, Jian-Ren did not notice any other change in his life.

After staying in North American culture for eight years, Jian-Ren felt that he was in the middle of two cultures but did not really belong to either. He did not explain why he thought so. He only said :

I was not a Canadian yet, but I was not a Taiwanese, either. I had not received my Canadian citizenship...Maybe I would be a Canadian. I was

not sure. I could not go back to Taiwan because I had to serve in the army.

As his brother, Yen-Zon said that his parents' absence had not had any particular effects on his life, Jian-Ren told me the same answer. He said :

I did not miss my parents from the beginning...If I felt bored, I would go out and stay with my friends.

He explained to me that back in Taiwan, he was not close to his parents because either he stayed late for school or his parents worked late. They hardly saw each other or talked. He felt that he had a distant relationship with his parents at that time. In his family, siblings also did not have intimate relationship. Each of the child had his individual life and seldom interfered with others. He compared his with other families and made a comment as the following :

I felt that my siblings did not communicate. It maybe from the influences of my parents...I knew that some brothers talked a lot to each other, but not in my family...We did not share our life experiences with each other.

I asked him whether he would ask for support from his family when he needed. He answered :

I tried not to ask from them. I tried to solve my own problems.

Jian-Ren felt that each of his brothers was very independent and well trained to look after their own needs. His parents usually told them that they had to take more responsibilities because they are males and would have to support their own families in the future.

It seemed to me that Jian-Ren had a very different life philosophy. He told me

that he was not very eager to accomplish any goals. He would study hard, enter a university and work, but he did not have desire to become a successful person. Here was his reason. He said :

> *I once wanted to become a renowned scientist...Now I think why would I want to do that? Even though I might become a famous scientist one day, I would still be an ordinary person...When my life ended, I was nobody.*

He had a relaxed attitude toward his life. He did not compete with other people or have strong motivation to pursue his interests.

In the end, Jian-Ren talked about his adjustments for the new cultures. He said that a person would have made good adjustment to a new environment if he could be fluent in the new language and spend time with native born people to understand the new culture. He felt comfortable living in North America because he was able to maintain contact with the Chinese community. He said :

> *There were many Chinese in Vancouver and Los Angeles...I had many relatives and Chinese friends.*

Surprisingly, he continued to say :

> *I thought that I had already adjusted to the North American cultures, but I found I had not after coming to Canada... My English became worse...Now I needed time to improve my English again. You need to practice a language often so you would not forget it.*

It seemed to me that he had not finished his talk yet. However, when I asked him to continue the topic, Jian-Ren said that he had nothing to add. I decided to close

our conversation. From this interview, I was able to know more about Jian-Ren's family. Although he did not talk much about his feelings of changes and parents' absence, I felt that he did his best to answer my questions. Unlike his younger brother who generally avoided answering my questions or remained quiet in the interview, Jian-Ren was willing to share whatever information he knew. For me, his scarce revelations about change and his family was much related to his perceptions of these issues. He took these changes and his distant relationship with family for granted. Therefore, he did not perceive differences and had little to tell me.

Three months later, I phoned Jian-Ren and asked for a second interview. He had been accepted by a university in Vancouver in the fall of 1998. He decided to enter that school because it was close to his parents' house in Vancouver and its reputation was strong, which would be important in assisting him to find a job in the future. He told me that he read the transcript and had no questions about it. I asked him to clarify his definition of adjustment in the second interview which was included in his story. We also talked about his studies and his plans for the future. It sounded to me as though he was enjoying his university life.

Chapter 5: Discussion

After reading and comparing these adolescents' transcripts, I found five prevailing themes in this study. They are making Chinese friends in Canada, distant parent-child relationships, establishing roots in Canada, growing up as a adolescent in Canada and making a good adjustment to Canada. All of these adolescents talked a lot about their experiences of making friends in Canada and the importance of friends to them. Most of them were willing to describe their feeling of adjusting to the changes. From their descriptions, I noticed that growing up and establishing roots were two major concerns in their lives. These had an effect on their reaction to future adjustments. When the participants talked about their lives during their parents' absence, they usually mentioned their previous parent-child relationship as well. These five themes were divided based on their frequency of being mentioned. Each theme covered a range of related issues. Each theme was discussed upon the reflection from the participants' interviews and my understanding of Taiwanese culture. A few studies conducted in Taiwan were also added to provide background on adolescents in current Taiwanese society.

From the seven participants' adjustment stories, I found that schools and friends were two frequently mentioned areas in their lives both in Taiwan and in Canada. This finding echoed those of previous adolescent studies. Other researchers reported that Taiwanese adolescents usually listed academic performance and relationships with their friends as the two most important events in their lives. (高源令, 1994; 江

承曉, 1994). 李蘭, 李明濱, and 陸均玲 in 1990 conducted a survey for grade nine students in Taipei, Taiwan. Students were asked to rank all sources of adjustment problems in any aspects of their lives. Most of them found it difficult to adjust when they did not perform well at school work. In addition to school work, friendship could be another source of adjustment difficulties when the adolescents attempted to seek support and help from their friends but were not able to get the support they needed. However, these researchers did not specify under what circumstances adolescents would turn to their friends for support instead of their families.

In a comparison article between the United States and East Asian countries (ie, Taiwan, Japan and Korea), 吳瓊汝 (1998) found that students from these two cultures had very different attitudes toward school. When Eastern Asian students were asked to recall their associations about school, they usually referred to pressure and lots of exams. Most of their memories about school were negative. Instead, American students had more positive comments on their teachers and schools than their counterparts. American students also had better quality of teacher-student relationships than Eastern Asian students. American students had a higher percentage of communication with their teachers or school counsellors when they had difficulties with school work.

Pressure to succeed at school is a major factor which motivates these Taiwanese adolescents and their parents to come to Canada. Their parents want to provide their

children a better education; otherwise the children can not complete successfully in Taiwan to advance levels of learning. The parents worry that their children will not have a promising future. In Taiwan, if high school students are unable to pass the entrance exams and they do not want to work at labour jobs, they have limited choice. Besides, the whole Taiwanese society expects Taiwanese adolescents to be good children and students. Adolescents learn that they have to follow their parents' and teachers' instructions. (牛玉珍, 1996) When adolescents were not able to do so, they felt that they were rejected by Taiwanese society. Especially for males, failing their education could result in a big stigma because they are always taught to take responsibilities for and to be the economic support of their family after accomplishing their educational goals.

The pressure to succeed continued after they came to Canada. Now their parents would have higher expectations for their children because they think that their children would be in a good learning environment and would not have to go through the competitive entrance exams. The parents ignore that their children's poor school performance in Taiwan may be from their lack of interest in their school work or they were incapable of proceeding to higher education. The parents do not offer alternatives for their children. These adolescents recognize if they are not able to meet their parents' expectations, they would hurt the parents' feelings. Poor school performance also resulted in a sense of failure and lowered these adolescents' self-esteem.

However, after coming to Canada, students found that studying was no longer

the only focus at school. They found that other students participated in a range of recreational activities. They had more spare time after school than they had in Taiwan. The pressure to succeed still exists but they hope to have their own lives. They do not want to spend all of their time studying. 黃立賢 in his 1996 article thought that most adolescents in Taiwan did not participate in extracurricular activities. They did not know how to release their stress. When they were bothered by school work, they did not know how to regulate their activities, such as playing sports. Some might be attracted to dangerous events, such as racing a car or gambling. They attempted to release their stress by participating in exciting activities. For these Taiwanese participants, learning how to manage their time at school and participation in regular extracurricular activities could be a challenging job.

In the following section, schools, friends and pressure to succeed would be repeatedly discussed under each theme. I do not intend to break these three into separate parts because they have a wide and broad influence in each theme that I found. However, I do want to mention it before the discussion so readers could have a good understanding of these adolescents' background before their coming to Canada.

Over-Protected or Distant Parent-Child Relationship

The reaction to parents' absence was one question that I wanted to get answers about from the adolescents in my study. I assumed that it would have strong negative effects on their new lives. These adolescents' responses to this question varied. Some

of them seemed to perceive their parents' absence as a positive opportunity to grow up. Some told me that they sensed no changes in their lives when their parents were not in Canada. Parents' absence had little impact on their later adjustment experiences. Surprisingly, these responses were quite different from my previous assumption. As a Taiwanese raised in Taiwan, I thought that Taiwanese parents and their children had very close relationships. The parents would not leave their children alone and the children were very dependent on their parents. Therefore, I assumed that the parents' absence would have a strong influence in these adolescents' lives.

These adolescents' early parent-child relationships had effect on the reactions to their parents' absence in Canada. Those adolescents who responded that they could have more time for themselves and felt less restrained during their parents' absence seemed to come from over-protected families. The parents, especially mothers, usually interfered with most of their adolescent children's daily events. As children, they seldom make their own decisions because their parents worry that their children may suffer or be taken advantage of by other people. The parents would make all arrangements for their children's futures. As children, they do not know how to look after their most basic needs. After coming to Canada and staying alone, these adolescents learn to be independent and responsible for their own needs. Although they still rely on their parents economically and sometimes seek advice from their parents, they preferred it if their parents did not stay long in Canada. The adolescents knew that their parents would not change their discipline. The parents would constrain their adolescents' autonomy if they were to live in Canada permanently. For

these adolescents, parents' absence provided a satisfying distance between the parents and the adolescent children. It decreased the conflicts of parent-child relationships.

On the contrary, some adolescents who sensed no change or had few responses to their parents' absence in Canada seemed to have a remote relationship with their parents before they came to Canada. Their parents' staying in Taiwan increased the distance. The adolescents seldom told their parents about their lives and feelings. The parents' major concern was their children's school work. They rarely asked about their children's daily activities or tried to understand their children's new lives. These adolescents are still dependent on their parents' financial support, but they usually ask their friends for immediate support in a new environment. These adolescents felt that there were few changes in their new lives whether their parents were in Canada or not.

According to findings of some Taiwanese studies, I found that the distant parent-child relationship is a common phenomenon in Taiwan (張永勝, 1996; 高淑貴, 1990). Sociologists and educators often criticized that Taiwanese parents were too busy working to notice their children's needs. Although parents provided adequately for the financial and material support of their children, they either did not know how to communicate with their children or did not have enough time to stay at home with their children. 張永勝 (1996), in his questionnaire for two hundred students in a junior high school in northern Taiwan, commented that Taiwanese

adolescents usually do not communicate with their parents because of infrequent contact. He also asked these students to evaluate their parents' concerns about their lives. After analyzing these students' answers, the author found that they usually evaluate their parents' care and love based on material support, such as "My father gave me money. (張永勝, 1996, p. 20)", "My father worked hard to make money so he can support me and the family. (張永勝, 1996, p. 20)". Very few adolescents expressed that their parents asked about their inner feelings. The highly competitive education system in Taiwan was another reason for distant parent-child relationship in Taiwan. The Taiwanese adolescents usually spent most of their time at school preparing for the national entrance exams. They went home very late and had little time to talk to their parents. (高淑貴, 1990) Most parents only asked about their children's school work but seldom asked about their children's lives. Some researchers felt that this widespread phenomenon in Taiwan might slowly dissolve the nature of the traditional parent-child relationship. These grown up children would continue their learned values to their next generations. They were used to a distant parent-child relationship. They learned that material support could become the substitute of love and care.

Distant father-son relationship is another finding in this study. These adolescents did not have frequent contact with their fathers and were geographically distant from their fathers. This result is consistent with the findings of 高淑貴's (1990) study. She found that grade eight students in two Taipei schools talked to their fathers least but

talked to their mother most. When we take another perspective, it also explains why these adolescents in my study have remote relationships with their fathers. The fact is that either in Canada or in Taiwan, most Taiwanese adolescents spend more time with their mother than with their fathers. Most of these adolescents take it for granted that their fathers are not able to get involved in their lives because mothers are usually the ones who spend longer periods with their adolescent children. In fact, their contact time increased because both did not have their well-established networks in Canada. They were isolated from their old friends and families.

This increased time of being together between mothers and sons could create pressure between the two. Mothers may become more strict with their children because now they have to play the roles of both parents in a new country. They feel that they have to be responsible for their children's success in Canada. This high expectation may create a tension between mothers and sons. On the contrary, these adolescents' fathers were not in Canada most of the time. They might feel guilty about not participating in their children's lives and want to satisfy their children's needs as much as they could. They may be in favor of their sons' decisions and may not be aware of the existing problems in their children's new lives.

Whether the adolescents in this study were from over-protected or distant families, they did not express negative feelings about their parents' constant absence in Canada. Few told me that they were upset and lonely in the first few weeks, but they were able to adjust to their parents' absence soon. There seemed to be a few reasons for these adolescents' lack of connection with this emotional expression. First

of all, they accepted the fact that their parents had to return to Taiwan to work at the old business so the parents could maintain the economic status. These adolescents knew that by doing so, their parents could continue to support their lives in Canada. Besides, when their parents left their children in a new country, they made sure that their children had proper care or some supervision from their families. Secondly, they did not feel different from other "Astronauts' Kids" or international students whose parents were also not in Canada. They felt that this was a common phenomenon in Canada. Finally, it might be their age. These male adolescents did not want to let people know that their parents' absence could create negative feelings. They learned from their friends and parents that revealing their stories to outsiders may arouse suspicion of their situation instead of empathy. They attempted to conceal their real feelings.

It seemed to me these adolescents' lack of connection with their parents in a new country are strongly tied with their previous parent-child relationship. These adolescents learned from the past that they had little to do with their parents. They did not anticipate that their parents would change abruptly after coming to a new country. Although some adolescents hoped to improve their relationships with their parents, they did not know where to start or their parents did not cooperate with their children's efforts. They felt helpless because they want to stay with their parents but do not want to have their parents' interference. The other adolescents learned that distant relationships are inevitable either in Taiwan or in Canada. Whether their parents in Canada or not would not change their life style. They would seek their

own supportive groups to adjust to a new environment. For these adolescents, their parents were absent spiritually in their lives starting from Taiwan.

Making Chinese Friends in Canada

Friendship is important to these adolescents. From the seven interviews, these adolescents constantly talked about their friends at school and outside of school. They told me how their friends helped them adjust to the school environment. When they felt bored and their parents were not in Canada, they could go out with their friends and did not have to face their empty houses. They did not feel being isolated in a new country because their friends would refer them to the existing groups. Some adolescents even felt that their friends could protect them from other people's aggressive acts. When they were not able to belong to any group, they felt that they could become the target for gangs.

Besides offering information about a new environment, support and companionship, these adolescent friends also provide substantial help. Friends taught them how to survive in a new environment, how to prepare the homework and where to seek advice when these adolescents were not able to solve their problems. They recognized that their parents could not help them adjust to a new environment because the parents could only speak poor English and were also not familiar with the new resources in a new place. They felt that their parents only searched for resources to improve their children's school work. Once after the children were able to catch up with their work, the parents were not concerned about other aspects of their

children's lives. (劉曉莉, 1985) These adolescents needed to have friends. They needed to comprehend the new customs at school quickly after arrival. With their friends who are Taiwanese immigrant teenagers, some of these adolescents shared their experiences with their close friends and hoped to adjust to this new country in their own ways.

Some participants in this study said that going out as a group is a common phenomenon for most Chinese adolescent immigrants (including Hong Kong adolescents). The purpose is to have fun, to seek protection and to have a feeling of belonging to a new place. When these adolescents' parents were not in Canada, they spent a lot of time hanging out with their friends so they did not have to stay at home alone. They went out with any friends who wanted to go out with them and stayed outside as late as they could because their parents could not supervise their activities or reinforce curfews. The parents were not able to screen their children's selection of friends. Taiwanese parents usually decide whether their children should make friends by evaluating the friends' school performance (吳瓊汝, 1998).

School violence is one reason why some adolescents strongly need to belong to a group at school. They had witnessed violence or had had personal experiences with violence before. They did not want it to happen to them and decided to join groups. However, going out with their new friends too often sometimes would have negative results. Some adolescents cited their friends' examples to tell me that a few adolescents might end up joining gangs which participated in illegal activities and had

to drop out of their schools. A couple of participants felt that these truant adolescents had too much money from their parents for allowance. They became easy target of some groups. The participants also told me that these adolescents usually had no interest in their school work. They had skipped their classes a lot before they joined gangs.

Unlike the description from some media, I found that most participants in this study seemed to have quite good self-discipline. They clearly divided their time between friends and their school work. My first participant was an exception; by the end of my study, he had to quit school and has not returned since then. The others concentrated on their school work even when their parents were not in Canada. They felt that going out with friends could be lots of fun, but studying is the most important goal for them. They wish that they had studied harder rather than going out with their friends so often in the past; so that now they would not have to double their efforts to catch up with their class.

When these participants described their activities with their friends, I also noticed that most of their friends were Chinese (including from Hong Kong). Especially for those adolescents who were from Vancouver, it was very obvious that local and Chinese students would deliberately separate from each other. From their talk, I concluded a few factors to explain their composition of friends. First of all, a dense Taiwanese adolescent population can create an environment in which they would not have chance to contact western students. Those who resided in Vancouver usually went to schools which had over eighty percent of Chinese students. Secondly,

the same language and customs contribute to their close association with other Chinese adolescents. They were able to express themselves and their emotions easily in their mother language. They worried that local students would tease them for their different accents when they spoke English. They and their Chinese friends could participate in similar activities which were from their old countries. Being able to share similar customs and traditions is important to these adolescents, so they do not feel that they were deviant from their peers. Therefore, some participants felt close to Japanese or Korean adolescents.

Thirdly, it was their perception of themselves among local people. It is striking to me that these adolescents already had a preconception of their positions from their parents or their Chinese friends before they actually approached local students. They learned that local students did not welcome newcomers to join local students' groups. They felt that they would be rejected if they made the first step towards local students. Finally, these adolescents' identities could also contribute to their selection of friends. They felt that they do not belong to this new culture. Although they could spend time playing sports or doing homework together with their local friends, they were not able to get involved to a deeper level. They would not talk to their friends on the phone. When they needed help, they usually turned to their Chinese friends.

After talking to these participants, I learned that making friends in a new country could become a very challenging task for some adolescents. When they suddenly transferred from a totally different school system, they not only had to confront changes from class but also needed to manage their interpersonal

relationship in this new environment. This is inevitable in their adjustment process since most of them spend lots of time at school. If they want to quickly adjust to school, they need to find out helpful resources. When their parents were not in Canada and they would not turn to school teachers or other professionals for advice, friends become the most important origin of their support. From my conclusions and from the findings of previous studies (Kelly & Tseng, 1992; Kuo & Lin, 1977; Lam, 1980; Yinger, 1981), being able to build their personal network at school could be an important part of their adjustment experiences. Learning effectively how to select their friends, to be aware of their old culture and to understand the new culture could help these adolescents adjust successfully.

However, from some of these adolescents' conversations, I found that making Chinese friends could also have a negative effect on their adjustment to the new environment. They would prefer to stay in the comfort zone of their Chinese friends rather than attempt to contact local people when they had the opportunity. They were afraid of making changes. If they tried to do so, their Chinese friends would disapprove or put pressure on them to remain in the Chinese group. The friends would think that the adolescent disliked their company and the old Chinese culture they represented. The adolescent would not try to meet the new culture because he might lose his old friends. They would not take the chance of joining other kinds of activities outside and felt that they had to stay with their Chinese friends. Otherwise, they were taking a chance. They could be excluded from their own groups.

Making a Good Adjustment to Canada

A successful adjustment has different meanings to the participants in my study. The first interviewee felt that he has already adjusted to Canadian environment because he is familiar with weather, festivals and local resources. Some adolescents felt that they had successfully adjusted to Canada because they could get along well with groups from two cultures: Chinese and Canadian. They had no problems in making friends and in handling their school work. Others answered that they did not adjust well to this new country. They wanted to be part of this new culture, but found themselves still staying within Chinese culture. Their definitions for good adjustment were diverse. The duration of residency in Canada does not seem to have direct effects on their successful adjustment and neither does their participation in a Chinese only cultural environment.

Berry (1992) suggested that the Integration Type of immigrant who was able to keep both the new culture and the old culture had the fewest adjustment problems. Separation Type (keeping the old culture) immigrants and Assimilation Type (keeping the new culture) immigrants would have identity crisis and may lead to adjustment difficulties. When comparing his theory to my study, I found that the Integration Type adolescents do not necessarily have good adjustment and the other two types do not all have adjustment difficulties. Adolescents who stay only within Chinese culture could be as satisfied as those who stay within two cultures. Some adolescents who strongly identify with and want to join the new culture could feel that they had successful adjustment. Berry's (1992) theory was not supported by this

study.

From these participants' interviews, I found that their individual definition of good adjustment effects their perception of their adjustment experiences in Canada. When an adolescent wants to be approved by the new society, he would make efforts to integrate into his new environment. He would eagerly learn about the new customs. He wanted to make local friends and participate in the local community activities. He wanted to belong to this culture. If he does not want to keep his old culture, he would gradually separate from his old culture. If he wants to keep his old culture, he would try to keep both cultures. This adolescent would have good adjustment when he could achieve his goal: assimilating a new culture or integrating two cultures. Another adolescent would define his good adjustment by staying close to his countrymen and culture. He does not feel that it is necessary to be accepted by the new culture. These adolescents had their own adjustment definitions.

From these adolescents' definitions of successful adjustment, I found three related factors: being able to adjust to school life, to start the adjustment process within the first few weeks of their arrival and their information of the new country. All the adolescents felt that they had adjusted to a new place after they were able to catch up with their school work. When they had good school performance, they felt confident about themselves. They felt that they had abilities to contact the new cultures. Being able to adjust to school also included their abilities to make friends fast in a new environment. As soon as they had new friends, they had connections to the new school. They did not feel alone in the new country.

Making efforts to adjust to the new environment in the first few weeks of their arrival can also be one factor towards making a successful adjustment. Some participants told me that they would have had a good adjustment faster if they could have contacted the local society when they first arrived in Canada. They felt that the first few months were very important for their later adjustment. They could have become familiar with the new environment, felt comfortable with different customs at school and actively practiced their English. However, they usually made their adjustment a few months after their arrival. Some adolescents told me that they started to adjust to this new country a couple of years later. These adolescents said that they felt very excited about the new changes after coming to Canada and felt relieved that they no longer had to do the heavy homework. They maintained their Chinese life style and did not try to contact the new society. When they were used to such a pattern but tried to change it later, they found it difficult.

Some participants were not well informed about the new environment that they would encounter. They thought that they would have good school marks and they could be accepted easily by local students. They thought that they would be able to comprehend the new culture in a short time. After entering the school system, they found that their English was not as good as they had thought. Some local students had hostile attitudes towards the new immigrant students. It also took them a long time to understand that the new culture is complicated. Even after several years of staying in Canada, they sometimes could not catch the meaning of English being spoken. Some adolescents felt depressed because they could not accomplish their

goals. Some had to change their expectations.

I do not believe that a single theory can explain a person's adjustment process. Whether an immigrant adolescent would have good adjustment or not should not be evaluated by single theories but on their individual definition. Although personal expectation, successful school life and early good adjustment were found from this study, I do not think that they are the only factors to explain an adolescent's good adjustment. I feel that these could be helpful indices for parents, educators and counsellors. I hope that they would not be generalized to explain these adolescents' experiences because each adolescent could have different expectations and school experience. He also has his own timing for the process of adjustment.

Establishing Roots in Canada

One theme that stands out from these interviews was these adolescents' weak commitment to the new country. In spite of their preference to Canada, all of them told me that they would like to return to Taiwan or go to Eastern Asian countries, such as China or Japan after their graduation from Canadian universities or colleges. This finding did not surprise me. According to my personal conversations with other Taiwanese immigrants, most of them told me that they would like to return to Taiwan after they receive their Canadian citizenship. The parents hoped that their children could find better jobs in the United States or in Taiwan. They felt that the job market in Canada is very limited.

For those adolescents in my study, their parents' absence from Canada seemed

to affect their commitment to the new country. They felt that their families did not plan to stay in Canada permanently. They thought that their parents might want them to leave for another country one day in the future. These adolescents came to Canada to pursue their education or to escape from the obligatory army service in Taiwan. After receiving their university degree or protection from army service afforded them by their Canadian citizenship, they no longer have a strong desire to remain in this culture.

However, after talking to these adolescents at a deeper level, I found that not every adolescent wants to return on his own will. Some adolescents do not want to go back to Taiwan because they are used to western life style and do not want to make another adjustment. If they return to Taiwan before completing an advanced education in Canada, they will be unable to pass the competitive entrance exams or tolerate the rigid education system. Besides, after their return to Taiwan, their independence and autonomy might be deprived again as before coming to Canada.

Nevertheless, these adolescents need to go back to Taiwan or another country so they can meet their parents' expectations. Some would continue their fathers' business. Some parents would arrange jobs for their children. These adolescents' parents would have better personal networks in Taiwan to help their children gain jobs than in Canada. These adolescents recognize that they would have better opportunities provided by their parents in Taiwan than they have in Canada. Those who want to go China or Japan felt that the cultures of these two countries are similar to Taiwanese culture. Another reason is that their parents encourage the

children to gain some work experiences in another country before inheriting the parents' business.

Beside their weak commitment, these adolescents seem to have an identity confusion. Most of them told me that they might remain in Canada after receiving their citizenship, but they were not very certain that they would become Canadians. Some felt that they were not Taiwanese and not Canadians. They were in the middle between two cultures. Some said that they would always be Taiwanese, but they would like to be Canadians as well. Some adolescents do not care about their natural identity. They would go to any other country in the future. They thought that they could adjust well in another new culture.

In my opinion, these adolescents have not established roots in Canada. They might have good adjustment in this new country, but they do not have a feeling of belonging to this country. Therefore, in spite of their long residency in Canada (one has stayed for six years), they did not connect to the new culture. On the other hand, they do not have a strong sense of belonging to Taiwan either. After many years living in another country, they were no longer familiar with the old environment. Although some adolescents said that they never could change their Chinese identity, their perception of the old culture was not the same any more. For example, they were used to indirect communication which is widely applied by Taiwanese. Now they prefer open and direct communication. They still respect their parents, but they would argue with their parents when conflicts arose between them.

I felt that this floating root in two cultures may cause these adolescents' apathy

for their surrounding environment. They felt that they could not change anything in their environment. 陳騰祥 (1989) in his article discussed adolescents' apathy towards their environment. He compared literature from Taiwan and Japan and concluded that these adolescents usually had low commitment to their environment. They did not express their opinions or participate in any activities. They tried to protect themselves from the highly competitive society around them. They do not want to show any personal feelings and they try to avoid unpleasant situations where they feel that they can not make any changes in their environment. These adolescents were used to following instructions without any emotional attachment. When these adolescents had the opportunity to make their own decisions, they did not know how to deal with the changes or would withdraw from the environment. They thought that if they did not get involved in their environment, they would not get hurt or criticism from surrounding people.

Growing Up in a Different Culture

The participants in this study have the same developmental issues as any other adolescents in another culture. They were anxious about their school performance, career, interpersonal relationships and self-images. They were growing up fast physically and psychologically. They did not want their parents to interfere with their lives, but they also wanted to get their parents' advice and support. These adolescents were in a fast growing process.

In addition to the common developmental issues, these adolescents needed to

solve other growing up issues in a different culture. They had to explore their national identities and had great pressure to succeed in Canada. They recognized that their reason for coming to Canada is for pursuit of a better education. If they could not have a good school performance, they would fall short of their goals and may depreciate their own abilities. They would have negative perceptions about themselves. Although there are other growing up issues in their life, success at school becomes the only focus. If they fail, they do not know what other alternatives exist for their future. Their parents do not give them a range of options for the future.

In my study, six participants (except the sixth interviewee) expressed that they were not grown up yet. This finding echoed Erickson's theory (1968) . They felt that they were unable to take their own responsibilities for themselves. They wished that their mothers could take care of the household. If we consider that these adolescents need to face many growing up issues in Canada alone and are eager to obtain their independence, it seems to be a contradiction that they then declare that they were not grown up yet and still need their parents' protection and support. However, when we look at these adolescents' cultural background, it might answer this apparent conflict.

It is a common phenomenon that younger adolescents in Taiwan were accustomed to let their parents make decisions for their future. They accepted their parents' arrangements for going to school, choosing their friends and selecting their hobbies. They seldom had to take any responsibility. As these adolescents grew older, the parents would still want to prepare everything for their children. Although some children were eager to seek their autonomy, many others were afraid to do so

because they do not want to make mistakes. They do not learn how to grow up. The adolescents from my study were from the same cultural background. Although they need to learn how to look after themselves and sometimes they could make their own decisions during their parents' absence, most of the time, they just follow their parents' instructions in this new country.

For some participants, growing up can be a scary process. They may receive their freedom and independence, but it also comes together with more responsibilities in their lives. After they are grown up, they cannot use their parents as an excuse for unwanted decisions that they themselves had chosen. They do not want to grow up soon because they feel that they are not ready yet. They want to stay under their parents' shelter. 干櫻芬 (1997) in a national survey for Taiwanese adolescents (including junior and high schools) found that most males and females students hoped that their parents or teachers could determine their careers and types of jobs. She also found that students who had good performance at school tended to arrange their future better. Those students who had poor school marks hoped that their parents could make decisions. The author did not explain the different results from the two groups. In my viewpoint, good students had more confidence of their own abilities. They felt that they could compete with other students with Taiwanese exam system. They knew that they could get a higher degree and had better job opportunities in the future. Those students who did not have good school performance worried about their futures. They felt that they had no future because they could not proceed to higher education.

Growing up in Canada is not an easy process for these adolescents. They left their familiar environment and had to adjust to a new country. Maybe coming to Canada provides an opportunity to leave behind the old expectations from Taiwan. Maybe they could learn to grow up at their own pace. However, when they are not ready to do so but suddenly had to face all the changes, growing up in a different culture could become a dangerous thing. They do not have coping skills to solve their growing up issues because they were accustomed to letting their parents decide their lives. Their parents' absence from Canada could have negative effects on their process of growing up. They do not have their parents' guidance and advice in a new environment.

Chapter 6: Summary and Recommendations

Summary

In summary, this study encompassed the complexity of historical, political, societal and personal background issues. Coming from Taiwan, I understood how the valuing of western education, the unstable political situation between two Chinese governments and the highly competitive education system could result in Taiwanese parents' choosing to send their children to another country. Being a Taiwanese in Canada helped me realize that overcoming language, education, interpersonal, cultural and identity changes could be difficult in the process of adjustment. With the referral assistance provided by my key informant, I could actually enter these adolescents' inner worlds and hear their adjustment stories.

As I initially started this study to understand the "Astronauts' Kids" phenomenon, I hoped to learn how these Taiwanese adolescents deal with their changes in Canada and how they adjusted to the environment during their parents' absence. I also wanted to know why some of these "Astronauts' Kids" got themselves into trouble: dropping out of school, spending their money lavishly or participating in illegal activities. Is their parents' absence contributing to these adolescents' misconduct? As I interviewed the first two participants, I found that they had regular lives as they had in Taiwan. They may hang out a lot with their friends. Their parents' absence may make them different from any other adolescent immigrants, but these " Astronauts Kids " are like most adolescents. They worry

about their school work, their friendships and their careers. These initial findings motivated me to explore further these adolescent lives. I wanted to know whether their lives have changed after coming to Canada. I hoped to know how they perceived themselves in this new country. Do they think that they had good adjustment? As I interviewed more adolescents, I found that I needed to search Taiwanese adolescent studies to understand current Taiwanese adolescents' situation in Taiwan. I shared my collected information with my participants during their interview. I asked about their definition of good adjustment and whether they achieved their goals or not. I also talked to my Taiwanese friends who grew up in Canada. They shared their opinions about "Astronauts' Kids" with me. This study developed deeper and wider than my first thought.

From this study, I was able to have further understanding about the "Astronauts' Kids" phenomenon. I had heard of this phenomenon before I came to Canada. When I read the articles from the newspaper in Taiwan, I often wondered why parents could send their children abroad and then leave the children in the new country alone. I wondered what it would be like if I had to live in a new country alone. It was not until my coming to Canada that I was able to answer most of my questions. I learned that living alone in a new country was not easy. From my experiences as an adult in a new environment, I wanted to know how these adolescents went through their experiences of being alone in a new country.

The five main themes found in the adolescents' conversations answered my questions as to why these adolescents had few responses to their parents' absence

and how they could adjust to Canadian culture. These themes are over-protected or distant parent-child relationship, making Chinese friends in Canada, establishing roots in Canada, growing up as an adolescent in Canada and making a good adjustment to Canada. These themes weave together and shape these adolescents' unique stories. They provide explanations as to why these adolescents have little commitment to both countries: Taiwan and Canada, their uncertainty for the future and their fear of growing up in another country. In spite of their declared well-adjustment experiences so far, I felt that these adolescents will face more challenges in the future. I worry that some of them will continue learned parent-child interactions from their parents into their relations with the next generation. Some of them may have internalized feeling helpless to change their environment and this may affect their adult years.

It is difficult to draw conclusions. This study does not show the end of these adolescents' adjustment stories. It is the snapshot. Their stories will continue after this study. After they go back to Taiwan (as most of them stated in our conversation), will they feel more comfortable than when they were staying in Canada? Will they have a feeling of belonging to their old country? If they stayed in Canada another few years, would they become Canadians or would they still not have established their roots in this country? There seem to be more and different questions aroused at the end of this study.

Some people asked me what this study can do for adolescents if little can be done to change the political instability and the education system in Taiwan. Parents would still send their children abroad. This phenomenon would still exist in local

society. I felt that maybe the bigger environment would be difficult to change, but the study may be influential on the individual level. This study does not intend to provide immediate resolutions for adolescents' adjustment difficulties. However, it opened one corner of this phenomenon and revealed part of the hidden stories for all of us to hear and understand.

Recommendations

The findings of this study show that Taiwanese "Astronauts' Kids" have many similarities to their counterparts in North American countries. These adolescents were uncertain about their future after graduating from school. They worried that their school marks were not good enough to pursue advanced education. They also worried that they were not able to make friends at school. As well, like many other adolescents around the world, they tried to figure out their relationships with their parents. Although their parents were not staying in Canada most of the time, they were struggling with their independence from their parents and seeking support from their parents at the same time. In one way, these adolescents were like many other adolescents who attempted to find their direction through many changes and obstacles that appear in their youth lives. They were not a special group and should not be labelled as a special group.

However, because of their language barrier, separation from their parents and from the familiar environments, these "Astronauts' Kids" were in a more vulnerable position. To help them adjust to the Canadian society, I would suggest certain

services should be delivered and accessible in their near environments so they are able to utilize the services and apply them to their daily lives. The followings are the services which would be useful to these adolescents and their families.

First of all, these students should have ways of connecting with the local culture. They need to have Canadian friends (both Chinese and non-Chinese) to orient them to the new culture and encourage them to participate in local activities, sports or festivals. I would suggest that schools and the local community should provide a " Matching Peers " service to these new immigrant adolescents. The workers can recruit a group of volunteer Canadian students from schools or communities to help these immigrant adolescents integrate into their new environments.

The best timing for delivering this service is soon after these new students register at school. School teachers and youth workers may want to work as a team to provide this service. The teachers and workers may want to have regular gatherings with the new students and volunteer students. The purpose of the gatherings is to provide other referral services to the students. In my opinion, this "Matching Peers" service would help the new students gain their confidence with making local friends and establishing feelings of connection with the local society. The volunteer students would have opportunities to understand another new culture and make friends. The school teachers and youth workers could be able to get response from these new students and to provide further services. Teachers may be able to bond closer to these students at an earlier stage and the students may trust the teachers as a support later when the new students are struggling with English and are low in confidence.

I would also suggest that this service should be actively delivered to the new students. Most of the new students can be overwhelmed by many changes happening in their new lives. They may be frightened to approach this service. Some students may be too shy to ask for help. An approachable service should be used. The school teachers may want to provide the information of this service and help the new students find their " Matching Peers ".

Secondly, I would suggest that a list of referral services should be provided to both the parents and the adolescents. This list should include the contact persons, addresses and the telephone numbers of the local community services, parent counselling, teenage crisis hotline, government office, school counsellors, and cultural broker agencies. This list should printed and enclosed as a package to these new immigrant families when they proceed through the immigration process in the airport. This list should also be accessible at school or in the community centre.

A list of private residential schools may be useful for the parents who plan to leave their children alone in Canada. Before their departure for Canada, the parents can search and check the facilities of each school. They also can make sure that the school provides proper monitor or supervision to their teenage children. This list of school information should be accessible in the family's old country.

Thirdly, I would recommend to the " Astronauts " parents that they should allow one of the parents to stay with their child in Canada during the first one year at least. Some of the parents may have to stay longer depending on their child's adjustment condition in the new society. I recognize that both parents may have

difficulties in staying with their children in a long run term because of their financial considerations. However, the parents will not able to understand their child's new life. The gap between the parents and the child would become big. The child may no longer want to share his/her life experiences with the parents.

Besides, the parents should be cautious about their financial allowance for the child. Although each family may have different financial needs, I would recommend that the parents should evaluate the cost in a the daily life and monitor the money budget. By doing so, the child would learn how to manage his/her finances and is less likely to become the target of some gangs.

Opening the communication channel is also important to improve the distant parent-child relationships, especially when the parents are not around the child most of the time in Canada. Parents should spend time talking and listening to their children's voice. It may take time to re-adjust the new parent-child relationships, but it will definitely help the parents understand the changes and the influences in their child's life.

Fourth, I would recommend that youth workers should prepare themselves with warm, sincere and persistent attitudes when working with these "Astronauts' Kids". The workers should recognize that delivering services to these adolescents would need a lot of devotion, time and energy. It can be challenging for the workers because these adolescents do not know the intention of the services and they may not want to trust strangers from different cultural backgrounds. The workers may find it difficult to be accepted by this group. However, when these adolescents realize that the

workers are on their sides, they are more likely to change their resistant attitudes. Besides, the workers need to know where to find these adolescents and how to achieve to them. A key informant can be very helpful. This person need to be social and has a wide range of personal networks. He/she will help the workers get into the group fast.

Finally, I would suggest that more research should be done to understand the consequences of the "Astronauts' Kids" phenomenon. I believe that this phenomenon has wide and long-term influences in local society. I would suggest that a few questions need further exploration, such as "What kinds of families would send their children away to a new country and leave the children alone ?", "What are the lives of these adolescents after finishing their school education ?" and "What are these adolescents' relationships with their parents and with their children ?".

By these above recommendation, I hope to provide directions to the workers, the government, the schools and the families for helping these "Astronauts' Kids" adjust to the Canadian environment well.

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Appendix A
Interviewing Questions

The following questions will not be in the exact sequence. They are dependent on participants's responses.

Participant Name: _____ Interviewing Date: _____
Age: _____
Date of Arrival/Length of Staying in Edmonton, AB. / Great Vancouver area, B. C.: _____
Have you ever traveled in another country/ Have you ever been to other cities in Canada: _____.
Number of Years in Relationship (Girlfriends/Friends/Significant Others) in Canada: _____.
Who is living with you now? _____.
Do you have siblings in Canada? _____.
Do you go to schools? _____. Where? _____.
When did your parents first go back to Taiwan after your immigration to Canada? _____.

Interviewing (to be conducted in Chinese)

General Questions:
I would like to know how do you define " Adjustment". Can you tell me about your definition of adjustment?
_____.
Please describe a typical day for you in Edmonton/Vancouver.
_____.
Please describe a typical day for you in Taiwan.
_____.
Please describe your experiences of making friends in Edmonton/Vancouver.
_____.
Please describe your experiences of making friends in Taiwan.
_____.
Please describe a typical day for you at school in Edmonton/Vancouver.
_____.
Please describe a typical day for you at school in Taiwan.
_____.

Specific Questions:
Please describe changes in your life after your coming to Edmonton/Vancouver.
_____.

Please describe changes in your life when your parents are not in Edmonton/Vancouver.

_____.

Can you tell me how you deal with the changes (including both parents are and are not in Edmonton/Vancouver)?

_____.

What is important to you in life?

_____.

What did you think about Canada before coming here?

_____.

How do you think of Canada now?

_____.

Please describe your plans for the future.

_____.

Please describe your relationships with your parents.

_____.

Please describe what growing up means to you? Do you think you are grown up?

_____.

Appendix B

監護人同意書

研究計畫名稱: 臺灣男性移民青少年在加拿大的適應經歷

研究者: 石貞貞 403-492-1867
指導教授: Dr. Nanci Langford: 403-492-9277

本研究的目的是希望了解臺灣男性移民青少年在加拿大生活上的適應經歷. 我對於您小孩是如何處理他周遭環境和人際關係上的改變很感興趣. 我希望經由您小孩與研究者的單獨晤談中來分享對方面的消息.每次晤談時間大約一小時, 有時在第一次晤談後仍然無法回答所有研究問題時,或是需要您小孩澄清第一次晤談中的內容時,我希望在徵得您小孩同意後能夠有另一次的晤談. 我預計總共晤談時間會占用您小孩三個小時. 我知道這些晤談或許會帶給您小孩一些不愉快的回憶, 如果您和您小孩願意的話,我會幫助您與單子上的專業輔導人士連絡. 這些晤談資料絕對保密,除了研究者之外,沒人會知道您小孩的姓名及身份. 爲了保護您小孩個人隱私,我將會要求您小孩選擇一個假名代表您的真實身份.

本人了解及同意下列事項:
這項研究計畫的目的,研究過程,及可能後果. (如上所述)
我會拿到一份對這項計畫的說明資料.
對這項研究計畫的疑問得到了滿意的回答.
我小孩與研究者的晤談錄音.
在晤談中您可以拒絕回答您感到不舒適的問題.
我是義務性參與這項計畫的.
如果將來我對這項研究計畫有疑問時,我可以詢問這項計畫的研究者.
參與這項研究計畫所可能引起的不舒適性.
這項計畫所收集的個人資料都是保密的.
在晤談過程中,我可以隨時離開.
我可以拒絕回答不想回答的問題.
在18歲以下的受訪者,在晤談前需獲取受訪者的監護人同意.
在晤談之中若有發現18歲以下的受訪者身心有受到威脅時,研究者需對有關機構報告.
您可以索取一份研究結果報告.

監護人姓名(請以正楷書寫): _____ 監護人簽名: _____
研究者簽名: _____ 日期: _____

Consent Form in the Edmonton Area (English Version)

Title of Research Project:
Adjustment experiences of Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents in Canada

Investigator: Chen-Chen Shih 403-492-1867
Supervisor: Dr. Nanci Langford 403-492-9277

The project is designed to find out how you adjust to changes in your life in Edmonton. I am interested in knowing your adjustment experiences, such as what did you do to deal with the changes in your environments and in your relationships ? I will ask you to share this information by participating in interviews, each of which will be individual and around one hour. There may be more than one interview if agreeable to you, because I might like to clarify some questions after the first interview. In total, I may require about 3 hours of your time. I do not anticipate that this project has any undesirable side effects, but you may feel uncomfortable or sad if the interviews bring back some painful memories. A list of professional counseling services will be provided at the interview. You may want to contact these professionals when you are not able to deal with your difficulties. All your personal data will be kept confidential and will be seen only by the researcher. You will be asked to select a pseudonym (false name) for this study so no one will be able to identify you.

CONSENT:
I acknowledge that the research procedures described above and of which I have a copy have been explained to me, and that any questions that I have answered to my satisfaction. In addition, I know that I may contact the persons named on this form, if I have further questions either now or in the future. I know that my participation in this study is voluntary. I understand that the interview(s) will be tape recorded. I understand the possible benefits of joining the research study, as well as the possible risks and discomforts. I have been assured that personal records relating to this study will be confidential. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study without jeopardy to myself and I may refuse to answer questions at any time.

Participants Name: _____. Signature: _____.
Parents' or Guardians' Names: _____. (When participants are not competent to consent) Signature: _____.
Researchers Name: _____. Signature: _____. Date: _____.

Consent Form in the Greater Vancouver Area (English Version)

Title of Research Project:
Adjustment experiences of Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents in Canada

Investigator: Chen-Chen Shih 403-492-1867 or 604-448-0062
Supervisor: Dr. Nanci Langford 403-492-9277

The project is designed to find out how you adjust to changes in your life in the Greater Vancouver area. I am interested in knowing your adjustment experiences, such as what did you do to deal with the changes in your environments and in your relationships ? I will ask you to share this information by participating in interviews, each of which will be individual and around one hour. There may be more than one interview if agreeable to you, because I might like to clarify some questions after the first interview. In total, I may require about 3 hours of your time. I do not anticipate that this project has any undesirable side effects, but you may feel uncomfortable or sad if the interviews bring back some painful memories. A list of professional counseling services will be provided at the interview. You may want to contact these professionals when you are not able to deal with your difficulties. All your personal data will be kept confidential and will be seen only by the researcher. You will be asked to select a pseudonym (false name) for this study so no one will be able to identify you.

CONSENT:
I acknowledge that the research procedures described above and of which I have a copy have been explained to me, and that any questions that I have answered to my satisfaction. In addition, I know that I may contact the persons named on this form, if I have further questions either now or in the future. I know that my participation in this study is voluntary. I understand that the interview(s) will be tape recorded. I understand the possible benefits of joining the research study, as well as the possible risks and discomforts. I have been assured that personal records relating to this study will be confidential. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study without jeopardy to myself and I may refuse to answer questions at any time.

Participants Name: _____. Signature: _____.
Parents' or Guardians' Names: _____. (when participants are not competent to consent) Signature: _____.
Researchers Name: _____. Signature: _____ Date: _____.

Appendix C

臺灣男性移民青少年在加拿大的適應經歷

研究者: 石貞貞 指導教授: Dr. Nanci Langford

您的參與對這項研究計畫很重要...
幫助新臺灣移民父母親了解他們青少年子女在加拿大的生活及可能遭遇的困難
這些資料可用來幫助其他在相似處境的臺灣移民青少年
這些資料可幫助其當地移民機構或學校老師更加了解您的需求

這項研究計畫的晤談對象是...
臺灣男性移民青少年.
在加拿大至今居住二年.
在您移民後的前二年中父母親曾離開加拿大六個月以上.
介於15至19歲之間.
目前居住在艾德蒙吞地區(the Edmonton area)或是大溫哥華地區(the Greater Vancouver area),
願意與研究者個別晤談.
願意敘述您在加拿大的適應經歷及回答相關問題.

晤談方式...
您可選擇對您方便的時間及地點.
晤談內容絕對保密.除了研究者之外,沒人會知道您的姓名及身份.
每次晤談時間大約一小時,預計總共晤談時間會占用您三個小時.
在晤談中您可以拒絕回答您感到不舒適的問題.
此晤談爲義務性參與.
在18歲以下的受訪者,在晤談前需獲取受訪者父母親或監護人同意.
在晤談之中若有發現18歲以下的受訪者身心有受到威脅時,研究者需對有關機構報告.
您可以索取一份研究結果報告.

如果您願意參與這項研究計畫,或者知道其他人對這項研究計畫感到興趣,
請與石貞貞聯絡電話 403-492-1867

Information Sheet (English Version)

Adjustment Experiences of Taiwanese Immigrant Adolescents

Researcher: Chen Chen Shih
Supervisor: Dr. Nanci Langford

Your participation is important because...
it will help new Taiwanese immigrant parents understand their teenage children lives and possible difficulties in Canada.
the information will be used to help other Taiwanese teenagers in similar situations.
it can make local immigrant service providers or school teachers more sensitive to your needs.

A participant in this study is who ...
are Taiwanese male immigrant adolescents.
have been in Canada for at least two years.
have been living without your parents in Canada for six months in two years.
are between at the age of 15 and 19.
currently live in the Edmonton or Greater Vancouver area.
are willing to be interviewed individually.
are willing to answer questions and talk about your adjustment experiences in Canada.

About the interviewing...
You will be interviewed at a place and time that is convenient for you.
No one except the researcher knows your name and identity in this study.
Each interview is around one hour. The total interview may require you three hours.
Your participation is voluntary.
You may have a copy of the research results.

If you are interested in participating this study,
please contact Chen Chen Shih
at Edmonton: (O) 403-492-1867 or Vancouver 604-448-0062